

THE FASCINATION OF PARLIAMENT. By Michael MacDonagh.

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THE LIVING AGE

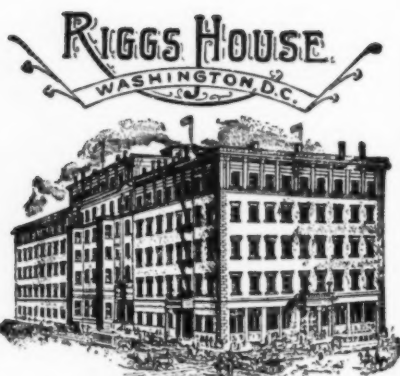
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SEVENTH SERIES
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TWO AGAINST FATE.

[“When a child is born among the Thracians, all its kindred sit round about it in a circle, and weep for the woes it will have to undergo, now that it has come into the world, making mention of every ill that falls to the lot of man.”—Herodotus, “Terpsichore,” 4.]

They all came round thy cradle, little brown head,

Bringing their shrill forebodings of disaster;

Bent crone and barren beldame, how they sped,

Each with the dreariest tale her tongue could master!

But thou and I

Cared not: they would be silent by and by.

Ah me! but when they had left us, little brown head,

The ills that they had summoned lingered after:

On every side I heard the stealthy tread,

The wailing voices and the mocking laughter,—

I saw them creep

And lay malignant looks upon thy sleep.

For Care stooped low above thee, little brown head,

And Pain caressed thee on the hands and feet,

And Fear's black shadow filled the dusk with dread,

And Famine breathed on thee—my sweet, my sweet

And Grief, who knelt

Against thy side—her very tears I felt.

And False Love smiling faintly, little brown head,

And Broken Hope that turns the world to gall,

And Sickness, and Despair,—I saw them spread

Their malison o'er thee that art my all;

Impotent, still,

I lay and listened: they must have their will.

Last of all, Death,—not fearful, little brown head,

But like a hooded mother, soft and dim,

Drew near with rustling garments, and did shed

Clear drops of blessing o'er thine every limb,—

Death, at whose sight

Those other phantoms dwindled and took flight.

How may I foil those Evils, little brown head,

How may I blunt the weapons they are shaping

To wound thee sore? Mine eyes un-comforted

Can see no crevice for our joy's escaping.

What! shall we two

Quail and surrender, then, as others do?

No! let us fight and face them, little brown head,

Through desperate battle waxing ever bolder,

Selling our life-blood dear. Yea, I being dead,

Should I forego the conflict? At thy shoulder,

Yet will I wield

A broken sword in the unequal field.

Thus upon Fate we trample, little brown head;

Her promises and threats, alike unstable,

Shall rift and shift before us: in her stead

Stands Love unconquered and unconquerable,

Clad all in fire,

Opening the doorways of the heart's desire.

So to the end. . . . What foe shall make or mar

That plentitude of peace, when, warfare ended,

Wild thyme and clover and the evening star

Keep watch above us, in one dreaming blended?

When I and thou

Lie hushed, close, close together, even as now.

May Byron.

The Spectator.

THE FASCINATION OF PARLIAMENT.

At the General Election was witnessed the old and familiar, but ever curious and interesting, spectacle of about twelve hundred men—varying so much in consequence, ability, position and temperament that they may be said to reflect, collectively, the very image of the Nation—engaged in wooing the constituencies which have at their disposal the 670 seats in the House of Commons. How comes such a strange thing to pass? What are the irresistible allurements that compel this large body of men, the majority of them actively engaged in business or professional life, to spend their money and time, their strength and temper, in order that they may be given the chance of making a gift of their professional capacity and business experience to the Nation, expecting in return neither fee nor reward?

Let us hear Macaulay on the subject. Writing to his sister Hannah (subsequently Lady Trevelyan) on June 17, 1833, after a few years' experience of the House of Commons, he says:

I begin to wonder what the fascination is which attracts men, who could sit over their tea and their book in their own cool, quiet room, to breathe bad air, hear bad speeches, lounge up and down the long gallery, and doze uneasily on the green benches till three in the morning. Thank God, these luxuries are not necessary for me. My pen is sufficient for my support, and my sister's company is sufficient for my happiness. Only let me see her well and cheerful, and let offices in Government and seats in Parliament go to those who care for them. If I were to leave public life to-morrow, I declare that, except for the vexation which it might give you and one or two others, the event would not be in the slightest degree painful to me.

Sir George Trevelyan, in his "Life of Lord Macaulay," not only corroborates his uncle as to the mystery of the charm of the House of Commons, but gives us, from personal experience also, a more forbidding description of what he calls "the tedious and exhaustive routine" of an M.P.'s life during the Sessions of Parliament:

Waiting the whole evening to vote, and then walking half a mile at a foot's pace round and round the crowded lobbies: dining amidst clamor and confusion, with a division twenty minutes long between two of the mouthfuls; trudging home at three in the morning through the slush of a February thaw; and sitting behind Ministers in the centre of a closely packed bench during the hottest week of the London summer.

If this were all that was to be said of Parliamentary life it would, indeed, be difficult to understand why a seat in the House of Commons should be regarded as an object to be sighed for, and schemed for, and fought for, and paid for, by thousands of very astute and able men. The constituencies are not engaged at the General Election in fastening this burden upon unwilling shoulders. How incomprehensible, then, is the action of those who, having had experience of the hard and thankless lot of the Member of Parliament, its mental strain, its physical discomforts, yet labor unceasingly, night and day, during the month of the General Election to induce the electors to send them back again to the dreary round of routine tasks at Westminster. Indeed Macaulay himself felt keenly the loss of his seat for Edinburgh in 1847, though at the time he was absorbed in his "History of England"; and in 1852,

with his great work still uncompleted, he was delighted to be returned again to Parliament by his old constituency. But the truth is, we have been given only the dark side of the picture. There is a silver lining also to the cloud. The life of a representative of the people, as we shall presently see, has its compensation.

Still, the tribulations of an M.P. are undoubtedly many. There are, to begin with, the torments of the post. Cobden, in a letter to a friend, early in 1846, when his name as the leader of the agitation for the repeal of the Corn Laws was in all men's mouths, gives us an interesting glimpse into the contents, half laughable and half pathetic, of the letter-bag of an M.P. He says:

First, half the mad people in the country who are still at large, and they are legion, address their incoherent ravings to the most notorious man of the hour. Next, the kindred tribe who think themselves poets, who are more difficult than the mad people to deal with, send their doggerel and solicit subscriptions to their volumes, with occasional requests to be allowed to dedicate them. Then there are the Jeremy Diddlers, who begin their epistles with high-flown compliments upon my services to the millions, and always wind up with a request that I will bestow a trifle upon the individual who ventures to lay his distressing case before me. To add to my miseries, people have now got an idea that I am influential with the Government, and the small place-hunters are at me.

Cobden enclosed a specimen of the begging-letters he was accustomed to receive. It was from a lady asking him to become her "generous and noble-minded benefactor." As she desired to begin to do something for herself, she hoped he would procure her a loan of £5000 "to enable her to rear poultry for London and other large market towns." In another letter, written

July 14, 1846, after the taxes on breadstuffs had been repealed, and the Corn Law League disbanded, Cobden says:

I thought I should be allowed to be forgotten after my address to my constituents. But every post brings me twenty or thirty letters—and such letters! I am teased to death by place-hunters of every degree, who wish me to procure them Government appointments. Brothers of peers—aye, "honourables"—are amongst the number. I have but one answer for all: "I would not ask a favor of the Ministry to serve my own brother." I often think what must be the fate of Lord John, or Peel, with half the needy aristocracy knocking at the Treasury doors.

Things have but little improved, if at all, since the time of Cobden. The ordinary elector fails to see that his representative deserves any gratitude or thanks for his services in Parliament. On the contrary, he thinks it is he who is entitled to some return for having helped his representative to a seat in the House of Commons in preference to another who was equally eager for the honor. The spectacle of so many men competing for the voluntary service of the State in the capacity of a Member of Parliament cannot but make the ordinary elector feel that he is conferring a favor on the particular candidate for whom he votes. This being their state of mind, constituents are naturally exacting. As the representative, on the other hand, desires to retain his seat, he cannot afford to ignore a letter from even the humblest and obscurest of the electors. The General Election may come round again with unexpected suddenness, bringing with it the day of reckoning for the Member. Then it is that the voter, however humble, however obscure, can help to make or mar the prospect of his return to St. Stephen's. But constituents will unreasonably persist in asking for things impossible.

In the post-bag of the representative appointments are greatly in demand. There was a time when the M.P. had some patronage to distribute in the way of nominations to posts in the Customs, the Excise and the Inland Revenue, for which no examination was required, should the Party he supported be in power. But that good time, or bad, is gone and for ever. The throwing open of the Civil Service to competition has deprived the M.P. of this sort of small change, which he once was able to scatter among the electors so as to reward past services and secure future support. Now he has absolutely nothing in his gift, except, perhaps, a nomination for any vacant sub-postoffice in his constituency. Yet numbers of the electors still imagine there are many comfortable posts which are to be had by their representatives merely for the saying of a word to some Minister. An example of what the M.P. has occasionally to put up with is found in the following blunt and abusive epistle, sent by a disappointed office-seeker to the man he says "he carried in on his own shoulders" at the last election:

Dear Sir,—

You're a fraud, and you know it. I don't care a rap for the billet or the money either, but you could hev got it for me if you wasn't so mean. Two pound a week ain't any moar to me than 40 shillin' is to you, but I objekt to bein' a maid a fool of. Soon after you was elected by my hard workin', a feller here wanted to bet me that You wouldn't be in the House more than a week before you made a ass of yourself. I bet him a Cow on that as I thort you was worth it then. After I got Your Note sayin' you declined to aekt in the matter I driv the Cow over to the Feller's place an' tole him he had won her.

That's orl I got by howlin' meself Hoarse for you on pole day, an' months befoar. I believe you think you'll get in agen. I don't. Yure no man. An'

I don't think yure much of a demerocrat either. I lowers meself ritin to so low a feller, even tho I med him a member of parliement.

Electors also argue that as M.P.'s are law-makers they should be able to rescue law-breakers from the clutches of the police. Accordingly there are appeals to have fines imposed on children for breaking windows remitted, and even to get sentences of penal servitude revoked. The respectable tradesman on the verge of bankruptcy, who could be restored to a sound financial position by the loan of £100, sends many a cadging letter. He usually declares that he not only voted for his representative, but attended every meeting that gentleman addressed in the course of the election. The best reply the M.P. could make to such an attempt to fleece him is to advise his correspondent to attend more to business and less to politics; but he probably never makes it, for he can rarely afford to speak out his mind to a constituent. Inventors are also of the plagues from which the M.P. suffers. The man who has discovered the secret of making soap out of sawdust writes glowing letters about the fortune to be made if a company were formed to work the process. Almost every post brings bottles of mixtures and boxes of lozenges, calculated to transform the harshest voice into the clearest and mellowest. "Send me a testimonial," said the maker of one mixture, "that, after you had used my specific, the house was spellbound by the music of your tones." Tradesmen are also most importunate. Quite recently the announcement of an interesting event in the family of a Member appeared in the Press. Next day a van pulled up at the entrance to the Houses of Parliament. It contained three different kinds of perambulators; and the tradesman who brought them was extremely indignant because the

police refused him admission to the House to display their good points and advantages to the happy father. Poets ask for subscriptions to publish their works, or, enclosing some doggerel verses as samples, appeal for orders for odes for the next General Election.

If you would quote in the House a verse from my volume, "Twitterings in the Twilight," what a grand advertisement I'd get! [wrote one rhymester to his representative]. You might say something like this: One of the most delightful collections of poems it has ever been my good fortune to come across is Mr. Socrates Wilkin's "Twitterings in the Twilight." Could the situation in which the Empire finds itself be more happily touched off than in the following verse of that eminent poet?—and then go on to quote some lines from my book, which I enclose.

Members who are lawyers and doctors are expected by a large section of their constituents to give professional advice for nothing. If one of these unreasonable persons has a dispute with his landlord as to the amount of rent due, or finds it impossible to recover a debt, he expects, as a matter of course, his representative, if a gentleman learned in the law, to help him out of his difficulty; or, if a doctor, he favors him with long and incoherent accounts of mysterious complaints from which he has suffered for years. The M.P. is also expected to throw oil on disturbed domestic waters. Here is a specimen of a communication which is by no means uncommon:

Dear Sir,—

Me and the wife had a bit of a tiff last Saturday night, and she won't make it up. If you just send her a line saying Bill's all right, she will come round. She thinks such a lot of you since you kissed the nipper the day you called for my vote.

But pity the poor M.P. who receives such a letter as the following:

Honored Sir,—

I hear that Mr. Balfour is not a married man. Something tells me that I would make the right sort of wife for him. I am coming to London tomorrow, and will call at the House of Commons to see you, hoping you will get me an introduction to the honorable gentleman. I am only 30 years of age, and can do cooking and washing.

Agnes Merton.

P.S.—Perhaps if Mr. Balfour would not have me, you would say a word for me to one of the policemen at the House.

During the evening the Member who received this strange epistle cautiously ventured into the Central Hall, and, sure enough, espied an eccentric-looking woman in angry controversy with a constable, who was trying to induce her to go away. But she refused to leave, and ultimately found a sympathetic companion in the crazy old lady who has haunted the place for years in the hope that some day she will induce the Government to restore the £5,000,000 of which she declares they have robbed her.

The Member of Parliament is liable to receive other communications of even less flattering and more exasperating character. Bribes are occasionally dangled before him through the post. Will he allow his name to be used in the floating of a company, or in the advertising of some article of common use or patent medicine? Will he use his influence in obtaining a Government contract for a certain firm? If he will, there is a cheque for so-and-so at his disposal. In a recent debate in the House of Commons on the payment of Members, Mr. John Burns evoked both laughter and applause by reading his reply to an offer of fifty pounds if he obtained for a person in Belfast a vacant collectorship of taxes. "Sir," replied Mr. Burns, "you are a

scoundrel. I wish you were within reach of my boot."

But the sane and the righteous give the M.P. more annoyance than the knavish and the crazy. Think of the numerous local functions—religious, social, and political—to which he is invited. When a meeting is being organized in the constituency, naturally the first thought of its promoters is to try to get the Member to attend. The more conspicuous he is in Parliament, and therefore the more likely to attract an audience, the greater is the number of these invitations, and the more widespread is the disappointment and dissatisfaction among his constituents if he fails to accept them. He is expected to preside at the inaugural meetings of local amateur dramatic societies and local naturalists' field clubs; and "to honor with his presence" the beanfeasts of local friendly associations. The literary institution, designed to keep young men out of the public-houses, must be opened by him. He must attend mixed entertainments of a political and musical character, at which his speech is sandwiched between a sentimental and a comic song.

But perhaps the Member of Parliament is most worried by the appeals to his generosity and charity which pour in upon him in aid of churches, chapels, mission-halls, schools, working-men's institutes, hospitals, asylums, cricket and football clubs, and in fact societies and institutions of all sorts and sundry. Of course it is only natural that if money be needed for an excellent local purpose the local representative should be included in the appeal. In some constituencies, however, many of these calls on the purse of the representative can only be described as barefaced extortions. Not long ago, Mr. Robert Ascroft, one of the Members for Oldham, in his annual address to the electors, made a

remarkable disclosure of the rapacity with which the M.P. is often preyed upon by constituents. He said:

In my hand I hold a roll of paper, which is nearly twenty feet long, and it is covered with the names of applications for subscriptions since I became your member. The late Mr. Fielden, a week before Parliament rose, while we were sitting having a chat in the House of Commons, said to me, "However do you manage in Oldham?" And I replied, "As well as I can." He remarked, "Would you believe it, the first twelve months that I was elected I was asked to give"—and the sums were mentioned—"no less than £27,000." Now [continued Mr. Ascroft] I simply mention this because I made a rule to send a cheque when I could afford to send it. But I am not an African millionaire, and I have no shares in Klondike. Therefore you must please to understand that when I do not answer these letters, and do not enclose a cheque, it is for the simple reason that I cannot afford to do so. I think that it is time one ought to speak out, and though one, as a Member of Parliament, is willing to do one's share for every good work in the constituency, do not forget that there are other men in the constituency, and of great wealth, from whom you ought to get a thousand times as much as you ought to get from me.

If a Member of Parliament should refuse to help his constituents in providing themselves with coats, blankets, footballs, cricket-bats; big drums, billiard-tables, church steeples, sewing-machines, he is set down as mean; and numbers vow he shall not have their votes at the General Election. The representative is, by all means, to be commended in resisting these illegitimate demands. But there is something to be said for the constituents. Surely they may very properly ask, "From whom can we more reasonably seek aid for our deserving local charities than from our Member of Parlia-

ment?" They recall to mind his accessibility and graciousness while he was "nursing" the constituency. Was he not ever ready to preside at the smoking-concerts of the Sons of Benevolence, to sing songs or recite at the mothers' meetings, to hand round the cake at the children's tea parties, to kick off at the football contests? Did he not regard service in the House of Commons more as a distinction and privilege than as a public duty? His speeches also are remembered.

Did he not tell the electors from a hundred platforms that for all time he was absolutely at their service? Did he not come to them literally hat in hand begging the favor—mind you,—“the favor”—of their vote and influence? Yet to this cynical end has it all come, that badgered by requests for subscriptions to this, that or the other, he replies—to quote the prompt, emphatic and printed answer which one representative has sent to all such appeals—"I was elected for —— as Member of Parliament, not as Relieving Officer."

In the House of Commons itself some disappointments also await the M.P. The motives which induce men to seek a seat in Parliament are, perhaps, many and diverse, but there is no doubt whatever that the main reason is an honest and genuine desire to serve the State and promote the happiness of the community. In the first flush of their enthusiasm after election our representatives zealously set about informing themselves of the subjects that are likely to engage their attention in Parliament. They soon find, however, that to do this properly would leave very little time for anything else. The breakfast-table of the M.P. is heaped every morning during the Session with Parliamentary papers, consisting of Blue Books, Bills, reports, and returns. Blue Books—ominously ponderous and portentously dull—are

by universal admission not attractive reading, yet eighty of them are, on an average, issued every year, demanding the attention of the conscientious representative. The Bills are more inviting perhaps, embodying, as they do, the fads and hobbies of the 670 Members of the House of Commons. About three hundred of them are introduced every Session. After the first reading they are printed and circulated among the Members, who are expected to make themselves acquainted with their provisions. Most of the representatives, perhaps, give up the task in despair; and instead of attempting to arrive at independent conclusions by personal investigation and study, they rely on their political leaders to direct them on the right path in regard not only to the measures dealing with the main public questions of the day, but to the Bills of private Members. But it is not all plain sailing even when that lazy course is adopted. "The worst effect on myself resulting from listening to the debates in Parliament," writes Monckton Milnes, "is that it prevents me from forming any clear political opinion on any subject."

So supreme has the Ministry become in the House of Commons that the power of the private Member to initiate and carry legislation has been reduced to a nullity. Only the Bills of the Ministers have any prospect of reaching the Statute Book. That is a cruel disappointment to the M.P. who desires to be a real legislator and thinks he has an infallible scheme for putting straight some twist in the scheme of things. The M.P. who aspires "the listening Senate to command" also soon discovers that the opportunities for discussion and criticism are outrageously restricted in the interest of the Government. Perhaps he has devoted days to the manufacture of flowers of rhetoric for his speech in a great debate. Night after night he

sits impatiently on the pounce to "catch the Speaker's eye," but fails to fix the attention of that wandering orb; while he hears his arguments and his epigrams used by luckier men, who had probably got them from the same shelf of the library; and the debate is brought to an end leaving him with a mind oppressed by a weighty unspoken speech. Then his constituents say unpleasant things because they do not see his name in the newspaper reports. They think he is neglecting his duty, or else he is a foolish "silent Member." There only remains for the representative the cold consolation of the old saying that "they are the wisest part of Parliament who use the greatest silence"; or the opinion of his leaders, should his Party be in office, that he is the most useful of Members who never speaks, but is ever at hand to vote when the division bells ring out their summons.

The man who always votes at his Party's call and never dreams of thinking for himself at all is to be found no doubt in the House of Commons. But to many an M.P. it must be a very sore trial to find his opinions often dictated by his leaders and his movements always controlled by the Whips. Party discipline is severely strict, and violations of it are rarely condoned. The speech of the Member, sufficiently sincere and courageous to take up an attitude independent of Party in regard to some political question of the day, is received with jeers by his colleagues, and, what is, perhaps, more disconcerting, with cheers by the other side. Such a line of action is often conclusive evidence of a good patriot. But he who takes it is commonly regarded as a crank and a faddist, and his only reward is to be "cut" by his Party. On the other hand, there are representatives of the people to whom the House of Commons is but a vastly agreeable diversion. Imagine the feelings of such a

Member when, on a night off, a strongly worded and heavily underscored communication from the Whips demanding his immediate attendance at St. Stephen's is delivered to him at some inopportune moment, perhaps as he is just sitting down to a pleasant dinner or is leaving his house for the Frivolity Theatre. If, prone as he is to yield to the temptations of the flesh, he should ignore this peremptory call of Party duty, like the crank, he is held guilty of a grave breach of discipline. His past services in the division lobby—on nights when the proceedings in the House were a regular lark—are forgotten. He gets a solemn lecture from the Chief Whip on the enormity of his offence. Worse still, his name is published in an official "black list" of defaulters, or he meets with a nasty little paragraph exposing his neglect of duty in the local newspaper which most widely circulates among his constituents.

And yet, with all his attention to the desires, the whims, the caprices of his constituents, with all his surrender of private judgment to his leaders, of personal pleasures to the Whips, what M.P. can confidently feel that his seat is safe? It is hard to get into Parliament. To remain a Member is just as difficult. The insecurity of the tenure of a seat in the House of Commons is perhaps the greatest drawback of public life. Many a man with ambition and talent for office does years of splendid service for his party in Opposition. The General Election comes; his party is victorious at the polls. But he himself has been worsted in the fight; and he has the mortification of seeing another receive the portfolio which would have been his in happier circumstances. To such a man, with his keen enjoyment of the delights and exultations of the Parliamentary career, life outside the House of Commons must be barren and dreary in-

deed. Yet never again may he cross its charmed portals.

But, happily, now that the litany of the tribulations and disappointments of a Member of Parliament is exhausted, there remain to be told many countervailing advantages and delights which must make a seat in the House of Commons an object greatly to be coveted and well worth the physical labor, the mental worry, the demands on the purse, which its attainment entails. There is the gratification of having won the trust of a large body of the public. There is the sense of power and influence of the legislator. The glittering letters "M.P." after his name are not only a source of natural pride to the representative, but a mark for the deference of others. They add, moreover, to his social consequence. Doors of circles hitherto closed to him are open wide. Even his business is advertised. When we see the name of the Member for Bubbington we inevitably think of his soap. To the lawyer a seat in the House of Commons means briefs. "I wrote books for twenty years and was nobody," said an author. "I got into Parliament and became somebody."

The House of Commons has been called, as every one knows, "the best club in London." But it would seem as if that opinion were no longer entertained. It is said that the House has become a collection of men differing too widely in social rank, pursuits, ideas and principles for it to be properly described as a club. Yet there is no doubt whatever that in regard to one of the purposes of a club, that of ministering to the personal needs and comforts of its members, the House is far better equipped now than ever it was in its socially selected period, before the Reform Act of 1832. At that time hungry Members were able to obtain but a steak or a chop or a pork pie at Bellamy's. Now they have an

elaborate restaurant managed by a Kitchen Committee very properly subsidized out of the public funds. It is said that an excellent meal of three courses can be had for a shilling; and that to realize what may be obtained for five would stagger the imagination of a gourmand. No wonder the Kitchen Committee were able to boast that as many as 105,054 meals were served during the Session of 1905. Even the secrets of the cellars have been disclosed. There is the "Valentia Vat," holding 1000 gallons of the rarest Scotch whisky, which was gaily "christened" a few years ago. About five hogsheads of the spirit is consumed every Session. But our representatives are not stimulated by Scotch whisky alone. We are told that the cellars also contain 1000 dozen quarts of champagnes and 1500 dozen of clarets. In fact, nothing is left undone to provide for the creature comforts of our law-makers at St. Stephen's.

In the Old House of Commons, which was swept away by the great fire of 1834, there was but one smoking-room. What it was like Macaulay describes in a letter to his sister, dated July 23, 1832: "I am writing here at eleven o'clock at night," he said, "in the filthiest of all filthy atmospheres, in the vilest of all vile company, and with the smell of tobacco in my nostrils." In the Palace of Westminster to-day there are half a dozen rooms devoted to the enjoyment of tobacco. The engaging spectacle to be witnessed, by all accounts, in the chief smoking-room any night of a Session suggests the question: Is there any reality in party conflicts? Political opponents who have just been raging furiously against each other in the Chamber are to be seen exchanging their real opinion of policies, questions and personalities, with mutual frankness and confidence over coffee and cigarettes. Political animosity in the House of Commons

thus ends serenely in a cloud of smoke! Then there is that most agreeable of all the adjuncts, the Library. It consists of five pleasant rooms overlooking the river. The bookcases are of carved oak; the volumes are beautifully bound; Members move about silently, for all sound is deadened by the thick carpets, and the atmosphere is delightfully pervaded with the aroma of Russia-leather. The books are about 40,000 in number, mainly historical, constitutional, legal and political, just the works, in fact, where Members are certain to find the necessary material for confuting each other's arguments.

The Ladies' Gallery, and the development of the Terrace from a lounge for Members, which was its original purpose, into an exclusive society resort, have added greatly to the attractiveness of the House of Commons. They explain the remarkable expansion, within recent years, of what may be called the fashionable side of Parliament. It must not be supposed that this admission of ladies into Parliament by a side-door unknown to the Constitution has had the effect of making Members neglectful of their duties. On the contrary, the social functions now so common at St. Stephen's during the Session keep Members, and the young Members especially, regular in their attendance, or at least always within hearing of the division bells. In the years when St. Stephen's was practically inaccessible to the fair sex, when the Ladies' Gallery was rarely visited, when there was no "Tea on the Terrace," and when a woman dined there at the peril of her reputation, the young Members were to be found, during the Session, more constantly in the drawing-rooms of Mayfair and Belgrave than on the benches of the House of Commons.

Moreover, many Members of Parliament derive pleasure and excitement even from the experiences which I

have set out in the record of their worries and vexations. Their correspondence, with all its manifestations of strange phases of human nature, is a source of entertainment to some, and it ministers to the sense of self-importance of others. There are Members who give an ear of affable condescension to eccentric frequenters of the Central Hall, such as the mad engineer with his scheme for uniting Ireland with Great Britain by a bridge thrown across the Channel *via* the Isle of Man, thus settling for ever the Irish difficulty. They have a smile of welcome and a hearty handshake for all and sundry. There are Members to whom the pressing invitations to attend bazaars, flower-shows, tea-meetings, smoking-concerts, cricket and football matches, are flattering testimonials to their popularity, and who find a rare delight in accepting them. At the last General Election one candidate issued a very interesting card in support of his appeal for a renewal of the confidence of the constituency. It set forth, not the admirable measures he had advocated by his voice and supported by his vote, not the nefarious schemes he had helped to defeat, but the meetings and dinners and flower-shows he had attended on the invitation of electors. Here it is:

1. Political meetings held in every corner of this great division . . . 53
Irrespective of party, at the request of his constituents:
2. Concerts and dinners . . . 38
3. Friendly Societies meetings . . . 18
4. Bazaars and flower-shows . . . 23
5. Athletic meetings . . . 4

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If you think Mr —'s efforts, as detailed above, a fulfilment of his pledge to serve the constituency to the best of his ability, please do not fail to record your vote in his favor.

For the young and ambitious among Members of Parliament there is the

dazzling prospect of office. The possession of any post in the Administration, even the humblest, carries with it a seat on the Treasury Bench, cheek by jowl with eminent statesmen whose names are household words in the land. It carries also the right, when addressing the House, to stand before the famous despatch-box, to lean elbow on it, and even to thump it, as a relief to the feelings in the very passion of the argument, as it has been thumped by Lord John Russell, Lord Palmerston, Mr. Disraeli, Mr. John Bright, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Randolph Churchill and Sir William Harcourt, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Arthur Balfour. It is true that keen and fierce is the competition for the higher offices in the Administration. The House of Commons, supreme as it is, is weakly human. It is by no means free from the unamiable weakness of intrigue and envy and greed; and the qualities of strength of will and tenacity of purpose are, indeed, necessary in the ambitious young Member if he is to escape being pushed aside in the race for office. Once on the Treasury Bench, however, he has won half the battle for a post in the very hierarchy of the Administration, with a seat in the Cabinet.

But the number of men in the House of Commons without social or political ambition is remarkably large, men who are absolutely unknown outside their constituencies. They are in Parliament mainly for their health. During the day they are engaged in the direction of great industrial and commercial undertakings or the management of banks, and in the evening they go down to St. Stephen's, which they rightly regard as the most interesting place in the world, for that rest and solace which comes with change of scene and occupation. Many old men, who have spent themselves in trade or finance, take to politics in the

evening of their days as a mild relaxation and a means of prolonging life. There is a story told of a great merchant who, when he left for ever his desk in the City, after an association of half a century, found the separation a terrible strain, and seemed likely to pine and mope his way to an early grave. His medical adviser recommended him to take to politics as a hobby, and to find a seat in the House of Commons as a distraction to relieve the monotony of his existence. But the old man did not like the suggestion. **He knew nothing of public questions.** The financial intelligence was the only portion of his morning paper which he had carefully studied for fifty years. "If you do not go into the House of Commons you will have to go to Paradise," said the doctor; "it is the only alternative." "Then I will choose the House of Commons," said the old City man with a sigh of resignation. To sit silently on the green benches during a debate, save when they cheer a supporter or roar at an opponent, and to walk through the division lobbies, as directed by the Whips, amply satisfy the desire of such men for political thought and labor. It is a soothing existence. They seem to grow younger every day of their Parliamentary life. Disraeli once said to a friend who had just entered the House of Commons: "You have chosen the only career in which a man is never old. A statesman can feel and inspire interest longer than any other man." A seat in the House of Commons does not, of course, make one a statesman. But, as a general proposition, there is much truth in Disraeli's saying. Old men find the fountain of youth in the halls of Parliament.

In truth, Parliamentary life has a fascination which few men, having once breathed its intoxicating atmosphere, can successfully withstand. Its call is irresistible.

I am going into the wilderness to pray for a return of the taste I once possessed for nature, and simple, quiet love [wrote Cobden from a retreat in Wales, in July, 1846, after the object of his Parliamentary career, the repeal of the Corn Laws, had been achieved.] Here I am, one day from Manchester, in the loveliest valley out of Paradise. Ten years ago, before I was an agitator, I spent a day or two in this house. Comparing my sensations now with those I then experienced, I feel how much I have lost in winning public fame. The rough tempest has spoiled for me a quiet haven. I feel I shall never be able to cast anchor again. It seems as if some mesmeric hand were on my brain, or that I was possessed by an unquiet fiend urging me forward in spite of myself.

If the House of Commons may no longer be described as the pleasantest club in London, it is the highest and most dignified legislative assembly in the world; and, however disappointed a Member may be in his dreams of political ambition and social success, there remains for him the consoling thought that he has the honor of serving the State, of helping in the man-

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agement of national affairs, of guiding the destinies of a mighty Empire. No wonder that most Members quit that exalted and historic scene reluctantly and with the deepest regret. They pine to return to it again, should that great misfortune befall them of being rejected from further service by their constituents at the General Election. Complacently to settle down to the humdrum of private life is for them impossible. Even the old war-worn agitators who have voluntarily resigned, long for the shoutings of the rival political parties and the trampings through the division lobbies. Hannah Macaulay relates that in 1830, while staying at Highwood Hill, the guest of William Wilberforce, she got a letter from her brother, enclosing an offer to him from Lord Lansdowne of the seat for the pocket borough of Calne. She showed the communication to Wilberforce. "He was silent for a moment," she writes, "and then his mobile face lighted up, and he slapped his hand to his ear and cried, 'Ah! I hear that shout again! Hear, hear! What a life it was!'"

Michael MacDonagh.

SOCIETY IN THE TIME OF VOLTAIRE.

At a period when the manners and morals of Society (reverently spelt with a capital) are attracting an extraordinary attention, and numbers of persons are enormously enjoying themselves in the always satisfactory employment of castigating other people's vices—

Compound for sins they are inclined to
By damning those they have no mind
to—

It seems natural to contrast the social life of this age with the most brilliant the world ever saw—social France before the Revolution.

In the ten years between 1745 and

1755, when Madame de Pompadour was in the first dazzling lustre of her beauty and her power, and Voltaire reached the zenith of his fame, not as genius but as courtier, as the friend, not of stricken humanity but of King and of Mistress, Society attained to a height of wit, luxury, and extravagance, of polish and depravity, of slavish devotion to pleasure, which will never be exceeded or even equalled, but to which the Society of our own time does bear, in many points, a startling likeness.

The first requisite for the man or woman of fashion in old France was

to be a courtier. The Court at once dominated and ruined the kingdom. It did not at all suffice for the social aspirant to come to Versailles once a year, make his bow to majesty, and retire to his estates and his duty. He first closed his conscience and then his *château*, gaily abandoned the house which had been the home and the pride of his forefathers, instituted a middleman to collect his dues and his rents, and arrived at Versailles. As the expenses of life there were enormous, he was for ever sending back to the steward for fresh supplies of money. You cannot make the people pay, because they have nothing to pay with? But you must! The trees on my lord's estates fell like ninepins before his insistent demands for cash. "The little black bread, and not enough of that," the bestial misery and degradation of the poor on his lands, soon turned from facts into dreams in his memory. He was not necessarily heartless or even unkindly; but he was very far off. And, of course, he must be like other people, and keep up his name and position, if he was to live as his compeers did; while as to abandoning the Court and returning to the country where God and Nature had put him—why, no one does it. The argument has quite a modern ring; but it was a much sounder one then than it ever can be now. If my lord had sons there was was not the smallest hope of advancement for any one of them unless they frequented Versailles. The perfectly unblushing jobbery of the eighteenth century stands revealed in that amazing publication of the Revolution, the "*Livre Rouge*," wherein one perceives how Louis XV. used the public money and filled public offices. A thousand a year to this man—as keeper of the royal wardrobe, shall we say? What's in a name after all? He had pleased majesty with his *mots*, or the mistress wanted him to marry her niece. If

one's boy was a genius even, what hope for him unless he toadied the Pompadour and licked the dust from the royal shoes? A Voltaire himself had declared that three words with the King's mistress were better than all talent and learning.

The nobles were right after all. To be a man or a woman of fashion then was but to make a career—to be decently ambitious for one's heir. It had some excuse.

Behold, then, all Society at Court, with that Court the pivot of the social world, not of France only, but of Europe.

Picture it with its thousands daily coming and going in the lavish and brilliant dress of the period, wholly abandoned to amusement, gambling, play-acting, sleighing, hunting, or busy with intrigues of the backstairs and clever frauds to cheat one's dearest friend of his post or his mistress; picture it as the golden cage of talent, the arbitrator of manners and morals, its head the Pompadour, its figurehead the King, and in the background a silent Queen, and hosts of idle servants, who, never being paid, recouped themselves by stealing.

As the Court was absolutely ruled by one woman, Society was absolutely ruled by women too. The fine lady of that day had on paper no rights, and in practice a transcendent power. She governed France from her boudoir, and lost it India, China, and Canada. She filled the posts in the army with her lovers and cousins, and brought it from being the fear of the nations to be their laughing-stock and their contempt. She was supreme where she had no business, and where lay her *métier* and her duty her place knew her not. She neglected her children to interfere in cypher with the political intrigues of those ministers she had made, and could unmake. She was supremely serious over a question of *ton* and of

mode, and in her matchless immorality as light-hearted as any savage—without his excuses; and she ruled not only the world, but daily life as well.

Persons of fashion who had not some lucrative post which obliged them to have rooms at Court itself, generally lived in great gloomy hotels, called after their names, and squeezed as close to the Court as possible. The hotels were invariably gloomy, it seems. It has taken the world nineteen centuries to get over its superstition that there is a subtle and lurking danger in light and fresh air; besides, in those days the window tax was a heavy one. In rooms, then, whose stuffiness and insanitary conditions would certainly give her luckless descendants typhoid fever, but which appear to have had not the slightest ill effect upon her well-seasoned generation, Madame began her day. She had passed her night in an enormous four-post bed, hung with rich curtains, with a huge canopy over her head, with portraits of her friends and lovers hung in this sanctum itself, and with a litter of the fashionable little dog of the moment in a basket by her side. Her maid, with her chocolate, roused her about eleven, and she forthwith took a plunge into that Society in which she worked, thought, played, ate, drank, and died at last. It is painful to add that she very seldom took a plunge into anything but Society. The King's ablutions consisted of dipping the royal fingers into rose-water and drying them daintily on a napkin; and to go beyond one's monarch in a desire for cleanliness would have been a lapse of taste indeed. Baths were certainly not unknown—milky baths, so that Madame need not suffer the gloom and depression of solitude even then—but the idea of soap in connection with them is one which the closest student of eighteenth-century memoirs and manners will rarely, if ever, come across. He

will be familiar, on the other hand, by description and in old curiosity shops, with the painfully minute ewer and basin in which fashion did homage to cleanliness.

There was no particular reason, then, why Madame should not make her toilet in public; and she did. In the little dressing-room sacred to it—a room with a north light so that the delicate artistic operations of her woman might be performed to the best advantage—she found alike her last new book and her last new lover; and while Suzanne tired her head and painted her face she amused herself first with one and then with the other. Of the lover it need only be said now that he was fit for his *beau rôle*, and for nothing else in the world. The book may have been the "Henriade," or a smuggled canto or two of the dear, wicked "Pucelle," or the "Devin du Village," comic opera by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, which delighted the Court in 1745. Suzanne, not at all like the tripping, little, coy Suzannes and Fanchettes of comedy, was generally what would now be called a superior person, in that she wrote passing well, spelt not much worse than her mistress, and when she had finished painting Madame's face and receiving bribes from Madame's admirers, retired to pen, ink, solitude, and memoirs of daring truthfulness which have become history.

Of the rouge and the powder thus affixed beneath the very eye of the lover whom they were designed to charm, Madame was in no way ashamed. They were a recognized part of the toilet. When it had been said of Catherine of Braganza that she "painted well," meaning her face, the words were meant and taken as a compliment. It was so still. No need for gentle euphemisms in those days. Paint was paint and a wig was a wig, and a fine lady no more denied the use of such adjuncts to beauty than an

artist, having achieved a successful picture, denies his colors and his brushes. While the finishing touches were being scientifically affixed, the woman who sold lace or the man who sold diamonds was permitted to show the goods to Madame. In the background, but seldom admitted, were tradespeople who had the ridiculous presumption to desire the settlement of their little accounts.

Presently M. l'Abbé elbowed his way through them—some daring, wicked, little rogue of an abbé such as Galiani, buffoon and secretary to the Italian Embassy—a most necessary and striking adjunct to the Society of that day, and fortunately without a counterpart in the Society of this. Famed for his love affairs and his verses, his gaiety, ribaldry, and atheism, only last night, it may be, at one of those famous suppers of the Temple, matchless for their license and their wit, he was Madame's chosen tame cat and confidant, and in every respect worthy of the post. Sometimes his *propos* were so outrageous she must needs blush, or pretend to blush, behind her fan, or rap M. l'Abbé with it across his fingers. But he was satisfactory—eminently satisfactory! With him one could laugh to scorn the threats and the bogeys of the religion of which he was the professor and she the disciple; mock, as that age loved to mock, at sin, sorrow, death, eternity—all the old horrors which troubled one's pleasure or one's peace—and mocking, dismiss them.

That M. l'Abbé often shared with Suzanne an intimate knowledge of Madame's secrets is very certain. It is also certain that his exquisite tact and *savoir-faire* never allowed that knowledge to offend her, and that, like the Society in which he moved, he carried to an exquisite pitch of perfection, never to be attained again, the art of social sensitiveness. Let it be

accounted for righteousness to the man of fashion of that time that his finger was for ever on the delicate pulse of other people's feelings and susceptibilities, and that its slightest movement was guide or warning enough. To be clever or a little stupid, to sigh or to smile, to go or to stay—M. l'Abbé had the art at his fingers' ends. The *gouvernante* bringing in Madame's little girl from the back regions, where she is growing up with the grooms and the chambermaids, is the signal his audience is over. He will meet Madame at the *fête* this afternoon, at the Court to-night, and again at her toilet to-morrow—in a word, when she wants him he will be at hand, greatly daring and gay; and when he would be in the way, behold! he has vanished into air.

In 1745 children were still out of fashion. "Emile" was not written. Dr. Tronchin was a Genevan apothecary. Sent at her birth to a foster-mother in the country, it was an evil day for little Angélique when she was returned to her parents' hotel, to a cowering neglect in the background, or attentions yet more harmful. Better the coarse ignorance and the terrifying stories of hobgoblins retailed by the servants and the governess, herself of the servants' class and education, than to be brought forward, painted, powdered, patched, taught the whole art of *double entente*, trained by an acting master with three months' rehearsal to take a part in a play—and to play a part henceforth for ever and ever. Childish naturalness—the greatest of all charms—never then survived maternal attentions. Well for Angélique that Madame generally considered her motherly duty amply fulfilled by disdainfully inspecting her offspring for two minutes at her toilet, and then pushing her away impatiently as ugly, *mal chaussée*, and *mal coiffée*.

When Madame had finished clothing her body she proceeded to equip her

mind. When was ever a woman who had so little education, and made out of it capital so splendid, as the French woman of fashion in the eighteenth century? Grounded by nuns in a convent, the good sisters at least did not teach out of her her originality, her freshness, her brightness, of which many superior curricula rob her sisters to-day. "Education is a great power if a man can only keep his mind above it." Madame's shrewd and alert little understanding always rose triumphantly above the learning she had. She not only caught the jargon of astronomy, philanthropy, chemistry, whatever the modish science of the moment might be—her modern compeers across the Channel can do that excellently—but she endowed the subjects with her own cleverness and individuality. Was it old Fontenelle's "Plurality of Worlds" that lay on her dressing-table amid her scents and cosmetics, or the "Esprit des Loix," published in 1748, or Voltaire's stinging contraband "Voice of the Stage and the People," that ran the round of the boudoirs in '50? On each Madame had her opinion—her own vivid, daring opinion, and not the *réchauffé* of some one else's which she had read in her newspaper the day before. If politics were her *métier*—and she generally thought they were—she communicated her schemes thereon to her lover, the minister, who must act on them or be lover no more. Through the Duke of Richelieu and her brother the Cardinal, one clever woman, Madame de Tencin, openly intervened in the Seven Years' War, "made peace in Europe," fought Maurepas, naval minister, over the question of the navy, assisted at the confabulation of statesmen, and comes down to posterity as "a great minister of intrigue."

The least ambitious of fashionable women wrote letters to her friends, enlivening the public affairs of the day,

criticizing current literature and the new trend of thought, philosophizing on life and society, whispering scandal—and all in the easiest, limpid French, with a wit and a piquancy which are hers alone.

If she could not spell or punctuate, what matter? The dullest of secretaries or editors can right that fault. But her charm, her grace, her gaiety, are gifts which came to her straight from the gods—for no man had taught her—and have never since been so richly bestowed on any of the daughters of Eve.

Put away the books, the ink, and the writing-paper, and make way for Monsieur the professor of the harp, or Monsieur the professor of acting. The first will at least instruct Madame how to show her shapely arms to the best advantage; and it is the fashion to play something. Madame Adelaide, the King's daughter, plays everything from a clavecin to a comb. As to the professor of acting, Madame should surely not need *him*. She has been taught the art since she was a child, and has it in her blood and her bones.

Then she will try embroidery or fringework. "Nous défilons, effilons, parfilons." As Early Victorian ladies filled an eternal leisure by making wool parrots, shell trays, and wax flowers, Madame was enormously busy in her idleness, and so diligent in wasting time there was no wonder she never had any for her duties.

Such as they were, or such as she took them to be, they were finished now. The coiffeur had left her with her hair built into the fashionable folly of the moment, with birds, beasts, and fishes nestling in it one day, and the next, little figures in wax of the last baby prince, his nurse, his parrot, and his negro.

The inward dressing of the head was finished too. The sun was at his height, the world was abroad. The

hour of pleasure had come, and Madame began to live.

In its mad lust for, and its slavish devotion to, amusement no society has ever equalled fashionable society under Louis XV. The upper classes seem to have believed to a man that they had been put into the world to amuse themselves, and that the rest of that world had been created to amuse them. Gambling, theatricals, *fêtes champêtres*, masked balls, suppers, fairs, sleighing, hunting, carnivals, succeeded each other day by day and hour by hour, literally without the interval of a moment. Should there be the prospect of a breathing space, fashion filled it by flocking to hear a fashionable sermon, or inventing a new game. Blind-man's buff, dominoes, billiards, charades, kite-flying—the great houses were full of fools playing them in every spare quarter of an hour. Villars and Sceaux had their “white nights,” when the guests, in judiciously assorted pairs, sonneted the midsummer moon in the garden, and spent the June days in writing each other madrigals and quatrains. Each noble house had its theatre and its private company of noble amateurs. To entertain the King and the Mistress, not only with a splendor to outvie all previous hosts, but with some piquant novelty, some *bizarrie* of taste or entertainment—a fine lady had no design in life to which she devoted more wit and energy. Sometimes one of the two great salons of the day, the salon of the Palais Royal or the salon of the Temple, claimed an evening. But the salons proper—founded by intellect, lit by wit, and held together by the nameless charm of some clever woman whose attractions needed not birth, beauty, nor wealth—were as yet in embryo, or wholly non-existent. Between 1745 and 1755 Versailles was the *salon par excellence*, and the Court the one rendezvous of the world.

Behold Madame, then, whisked off in her coach, so very much gilt and bedizened as to suggest to a prosaic age the pantomime chariot in which Cinderella goes to the ball, with her horses gorgeous in silver trappings, dashing mud on the luckless passers-by as she proceeds at the breakneck pace fashion demands, to the gardens of Versailles. It is summer, the occasion a *fête champêtre*, and the world out of doors. No vivid imagination is needed by any one who has stood in the park of Versailles to-day to picture it as it looked then—to people the lawns and the terraces with a motley crowd of nobles and great ladies as bright-hued as the peacocks on the long flights of steps, and just a little less artificial than the plaster nymphs and fauns looking down from their pedestals. The *fête champêtre* was the modern *al fresco* bazaar with the thin excuse of charity left out. Sometimes the great ladies were dressed as shepherdesses, and a Chloe, half an inch deep in paint and powder, played rusticity and pastoral pleasures with a worn-out roué of a Strephon, full of stale Court compliments. Sometimes she was a milkmaid, and royal and noble cowmen carried her pails and drank her stock-in-trade, which at least looked like milk. Everything was a sham here, from that made-up effigy of a King who, said Richelieu, if his ministers had undertaken to make him sign his own deposition, would have done it, to the obsequious servility of the least of his lacqueys, who just waited till his master's back was turned to cheat him and sneer at him.

Artificial cavaliers piloted their artificial mistresses on artificial water in a sham swan which did duty for a boat. The trees were clipped into artificial shapes. The very flowers grew in set patterns. The language in which Madame talked with her lover was the stilted language of a carefully re-

hearsed politeness and the most cunning double meanings. The passion she felt for him needed for ever the only excuse such a passion can have—a vehement sincerity. He, she, and their compeers were playing with love, duty, and life, and for a little enjoyed the game to the full.

When there was no *fête* there was always a reunion, "a salon out of doors." "What time is it?" asked the dying old worldling, Voltaire's patroness, Madame de Fontaine-Martel; and before any one could answer—"Thank God, whatever time it is, there is somewhere a rendezvous!"

At Versailles, unless the Court had gone to a fair at Chantilly, or to hunt at Fontainebleau or Marly, there was an eternal rendezvous. Here M. l'Abbé whispered into another woman's ears the secret he had wormed from Madame at her toilet this morning. Great ladies fought each other over the right hereditary in some noble families, of sitting in the Queen's presence, or driving this afternoon in the next coach to hers, instead of the next coach but one. As in all mean and selfish lives, these people took trifles for great things, and the great things passed by unheeded. Lord Chesterfield, writing pages on the supreme and solemn importance of "*les manières, les grâces, les agréments,*" and preaching the neglect of judgment and the weightier matters of the law, was but a feeble transcript of the men and women whose god and heaven was Versailles. To damn with sweet, faint praise; to stab reputations, not with the honest sword-thrust of an angry truth, but with delicate innuendo, fine, dainty, and cruel; to be false to wife or husband with so perfect a duplicity and decorum that when conjugal fidelity was wholly an object of contempt at Court, Horace Walpole declared that it was well-nigh impossible to detect the least impropriety in the relation of

the sexes; to express the basest meaning in the most exquisite phrase; to cheat, very courteously, to torture, with a smile; and to wear over a heart exquisitely sensitive to the faintest suspicion of a royal coldness or a fancied slight to one's "honor," fine clothes bought with the blood and the tears of the wretched peasants from whom one's fortune was ground—this was the company who decorated the lawns of Versailles. To cover any tones that were not perfectly dulcet, bursts of exquisite music and the songs of rare singers broke from alcoves in the gardens or from bosquets in the wood. The whole thing must have been something like a parvenu garden-party, where the entertainments are only too many, the appointments only too rich and ingenious. But there the resemblance ended. Vile as society then was, it was at least not vulgar. Slang and horseplay were not known to it. A self-control which enabled its votaries to appear always courteous and well pleased was *de rigueur*; and if it worshipped blood, it at least did not cringe to money.

Then, too, the very fact that even a great man could seldom make a career without toadying royalty had its advantages for the royal satellites. Though the King had declared that he could not demean himself to let "all that"—meaning all the talent of his kingdom—aspire to sup with him, much of it, despite him and itself, certainly did so sup. While the contact with Court contaminated that talent—and it always did—it was very delightful for the courtiers. Down these steps comes Voltaire, gay, shrunken, sardonic, with a madrigal for Madame de Pompadour sticking out of his pocket, scorn in his eyes, and flattery on his lips. Helvétius, of the great book "*On the Mind,*" was Queen Marie Leczinska's *maitre d'hôtel*, and President Hénault, "that well-frilled, accurately powdered" old

friend of philosophers and savants, was her confidant. The elder Crébillon, the dramatist, was protected by Madame de Pompadour. Young Crébillon, his son, she first banished for the indecency of his "Sophia," then recalled and, on the principle no doubt of set a thief to catch a thief, made press censor. Piron, wit and playwright, the brilliant, tireless rival of Voltaire, was always hanging about the Court; and Charles Roy, scurrilous light versifier, was also waiting there to put a spoke in Arouet's dashing wheel when he could. Galiani, famous since as the author of the "Dialogues of Corn," was first the laughing-stock and then the darling of Versailles. While to say that the Court was crowded with minor poets and authors is only a literal truth. The inanest lover wrote sonnets to his mistress's eyebrow; and Madame's descents into poetry were so frequent that for one of his female friends Voltaire thanked God fervently, as for a charm peculiar to herself, that she wrote no verses.

But the sun is sinking now. Madame returns to her hotel to make a change of dress, for there is a play in the Little Apartments, or cards at the Queen's table, and after, the *Bal Masqué*. The eighteenth-century passion for acting rose to its supreme height during these ten years between '45 and '55. Invented, as it were, by Madame de Pompadour to please a King who had long ago found all his dolls stuffed with sawdust, the thing became a mania, a rage, a possession. Nobles pulled down their mansions, to re-erect them with stage and auditorium. The Duchesse du Maine at Sceaux abandoned her house and household to the craze. Voltaire made his first public appearance burlesquing one of his own characters in his own play, "Œdipe." At Cirey he beat up a company in the wilds of Champagne, and often pressed his household servants into the cast.

The Comte de Clermont had two private theatres; and such noble persons as could neither form a company nor act in one consoled themselves by writing the librettos. But the seal, the hallmark of approval, was stamped on the new mode when the Petits Cabinets themselves were turned into a theatre. Voltaire, Rousseau, Crébillon, Piron, were its playwrights. Rameau was responsible for the score. The Duc de la Brilliàre stage-managed. The Abbé de la Garde was the prompter. Four noblemen occupied the dismal position of ballet dancers *en titre*. The Mistress herself, who could sing and act with the best professional actress of the day, was the heroine or the *prima donna*. Counts and marquises fought each other for the glory of belonging to the cast. Duchesses tore each other's eyes out—all but literally—for the same mighty honor. The shrewd Pompadour obtained a commission in the army for one of her relatives by giving a duke the rôle of a policeman with exactly two lines in his part. Actors, whose profession was anathematized by the Church and who were denied Christian burial, found themselves flattered and honored in the very palace of the Most Christian King, and drilling and correcting the haughtiest of his subjects.

The Theatre Royal of the palace of Versailles opened with "Tartufe," the Pompadour as *Dorine* (and the Duke as the policeman). Voltaire's "Enfant Prodigue" followed it. For his opera the "Princess of Navarre," produced on the occasion of the Dauphin's marriage, a special theatre had been built in the horse-training ground near the palace, and money was poured out like water. The appearance of his "Temple of Glory" was superintended by Richelieu, and not less recklessly magnificent in dress and scenery. D'Argenson declares that the production of the "Devin du Village" cost 50,000 crowns;

and the starving country heard with curses of the vast expenditure on ballets and farces. But in the audience sat a King who was relieved for a few hours from an eternal ennui; and round him the most unamusable creatures on earth—the men and women who have nothing to do but to amuse themselves, were for a while transported into fictitious destinies, and in the interest of other lives forgot the complete aimlessness of their own.

When there were no theatricals there were cards. Everybody gambled then. It was in the air. Over the card-table men not only lost estates, fortune, and honor, and women staked the jewels from their breasts and the portions of their children, but beside them, in the clutch of one of the most disfiguring of the vices, their daughters exchanged their freshness and their beauty for the feverish eyes, the trembling lips, and the hideous expression of rapacity of the accomplished gambler. The good Queen herself embraced this means of forgetting for a while her wrongs and her sorrows. Her favorite game, quadrille, gave its name to a ribbon—*quadrille de la reine*. At her table, as at the Mistress's and the King's, those inevitable cronies of the gambler, the cheat and the card-sharper, were present—here dressed as a lady-in-waiting, and there as a noble lord. "Do you not see that you are playing with swindlers?" whispers incautious Voltaire in the ears of his Madame du Châtelet, who is gambling at her royal mistress's side. The words, overheard and repeated, cost him a midnight flight from Court, and a brief exile at Sceaux. The gamblers paid more heavily. Many, indeed, only in ruined homes and fortunes; but some, whose counters had been the lives of the wretched creatures from whom their fortunes were wrung, in the vengeance of the Terror.

When the cards were over came supper. "Supper," said Madame du Def-

fand, "is one of the four ends of man. I cannot recollect the other three."

In proportion as eighteenth-century Society washed little, it ate much. The Bourbon digestive efforts are proverbial, culminating in the famous meal enjoyed — ay, enjoyed — by luckless Louis XVI. at Varennes, who, though he had lost his crown and his kingdom, never lost his appetite. Fashion copied its monarch. The fact that one noble gentleman died from partaking too freely of a *pâté* composed of eagle, pheasant, lard, pork, and ginger, was less wonderful than that Society, dally over-eating, itself remained astonishingly healthy and well. To be sure, in the letters of the day, in which it was the fashion to chat about one's inside, painful descriptions of an attack of colic, and the remedies taken therefor, are common enough. But the dyspeptic of our own day reduced to fluid beef, toast and water, or the last patent food, was quite non-existent then. The world ate, drank, and was merry; and though by all the canons of medical science it ought to have died on the morrow, it very seldom did.

At the royal supper-table a great deal of freedom in the matter of jest and anecdote was permitted. But the King was truly the father of his people in the sense that he was one of those parents who caress a child one day for the same thing as they whip it for the next; and the joke which set the table in a roar on Monday, on Tuesday might easily shut up the joker in the Bastille.

After the supper Madame took her coach, and with her lover and perhaps a couple of friends appeared at one of the public *bal masqués*.

How to be indecorous with decorum — French Society solved that difficult problem with the finest ingenuity. Even the *bal masqué* had the air of order and decency. Madame herself lived in the same hotel as her husband, and ca-

ressed—or at least scolded—their child at her toilet. Her lover was always ambiguously alluded to as her friend. The irregularities of her life were decently concealed by her woman—used to the business—and by her husband himself. Sufficiently illustrative of the base cynicism and the careful regard for appearances of the immorality of the time is that story of the husband who, finding his wife with her lover, merely exclaimed: "Consider, madame, how imprudent! Suppose it had been any one else but myself!" As fine clothes hid a whole-hearted disregard for personal cleanliness, fine manners hid cool and planned corruption wholly matchless. For these people were false even in their sin.

Failing the public ball, Madame went to the public theatre. Some of the plays to which she listened bear favorable comparison in decency of language with the plays to which twentieth-century Society listens complacently to-day. Voltaire complained of the grossness of Shakespeare as contrasted with the great playwrights of his own country. But in meaning, in intention, in situation, the French stage in the eighteenth century had a soft loathsomeness to which even the loud and boisterous indecencies of the Restoration dramatists are preferable. Of the *dessous des cartes* of Madame's amusements, as of her life, the less said the better.

Sometimes, like Madame du Châtelet, she would spend whole days in bed "without being ill." Far from cutting her off from Society, her friends were then amusing her from morning till night. Gossip, music, and verses gave the hours winged feet. In the evening her supper-tray—a beautifully compact little table containing all the necessary courses and their plates and dishes fixed into it—was wheeled to her bedside, and over it, without the *gêne* of the presence of servants, her abbé of

the morning told her the good stories (which were always very bad) he had collected since they parted; and after twelve hours, during which she had not performed a single duty or done a kindness to any living soul, she settled to the complete repose of the bad heart and the good digestion.

Of the life of the Society man—always a more despicable creature than the Society woman on the principle that to whom more is given of him shall more be required—the *Memoirs* of the Dukes of Richelieu, d'Argenson, and many others afford ample insight.

At best, he was a minister of state, shrewd, unscrupulous, intriguing, but at least busy over something, though it were but the building up of his own fortunes and the toppling down of his country's. A good deal stronger in intellect and very much weaker in morals than the smart man—if that hateful adjective can be used to designate the male creature of the smart woman of to-day—was the man of fashion under the old *régime*.

If he was a soldier, he advanced in his profession, not by hard work, but by currying favor at Versailles, and prepared for the hardships of the next campaign by the luxury, the ease, the self-indulgence of the most pleasure-loving Court on earth. When he did find himself on active service, he conducted the feeblest operations with so much fuss and glitter that all his friends believed, and he thoroughly believed himself, that he was quite a hero, and he had all the talent of the clever and showy captor of Minorca for making everything redound to his credit. With, of course, noble exceptions, the French officer of the eighteenth century was admirable chiefly as a carpet knight, and after successes as brief as they were brilliant, dragged his country through the disgrace of Rossbach and of Minden.

But if the man of fashion was, as he

generally was, a gentleman at his ease, his natural rôle was to intrigue for some such post as Clerk Controller of the King's Pantry, with huge emoluments and infinitesimal duties; to be always ready to exchange pistol shots on the smallest provocation, at a safe distance only and after much *chassé-ing*, *croisé-ing*, and setting to partners, with one of his peers; to attend the King's *levee* and the King's hunt; and to be exquisitely scrupulous and earnest that he should always be attired in the right gewgaws and fal-lals, and bow and pirouette in the latest manner. Faugh! the thought of this mannikin who was never a man, makes one long, as Edward Fitzgerald declared he longed after reading Jane Austen, for "one of Fielding's brutes."

That sure sign of the downfall of a character or a kingdom, to be serious over trifles and trifling over serious things, was the fine gentleman's to the full. He, whose "whole life was merely the art of being at Court," conscientiously imitated his royal master, who very solemnly turned *snuff-boxes* on the lathe and wove tapestry, and when his ministers were trying to make him attend to State business, made faces, or winked at Madame de Pompadour. At his best, the courtier *pur et simple* only used his cleverness to deceive suspicious husbands, and exhausted his energies in running after his latest mistress, and in escaping indignant fathers and duennas. Bribe chamber-maids and rope ladders—the gay and certain conviction that his shameful attentions were the highest honor—these were the principles and life of the noble gentleman of the old *régime*. As the Belmours, the Carelesses, and the Horners swagger through "the most profligate and heartless of human compositions," the plays of Wycherley and Congreve, so does the man of fashion swagger through the eighteenth century, always agreeably convinced that

he is a very fine fellow indeed, and that preceding the King's roast, holding the rose-water for his ablutions, and pursuing a duchess—or her maid—is a life really gallant and manly.

That he was over head and ears in debt, and mortgaged to the hilt, goes without saying. The Duc de Lauzun, by the time he was twenty-six, owed two millions; Madame de Guéméné was in debt to her shoemaker alone for sixty thousand francs. To pay one's tradespeople, in fact, was as bourgeois as to be faithful to one's wife. But then, as now, it was pretty comfortable to be bankrupt. The Choiseuls, ruined and disgraced, in exile at Chanteloup, appear to have enjoyed themselves vastly and not at all inexpensively; while to preserve and enclose, as all the great nobles did then, after the King's example, was not exactly cheap. "What will it cost," said Caroline, the wife of George II., to Robert Walpole, "to enclose St. James's Park as a private pleasure-ground?" "Only three crowns, madame," was his reply.

In France the price was similar—only the payment was not yet.

In that fashionable society, as in our own, there was no old age. That pitiful spectacle, the old woman trying to be a young one, was as common in France then as it is in England to-day. It was a point of honor with my lord to die, as it were, in waiting on his Majesty, and conceal under wreathed smiles the gout that racked him. Plucky enough these poor old players in their glittering comedy. Fashion was their only world, and she had no place for white hairs and suffering—those odious reminders that to this favor we, too, shall come! Men died as Charles II. died, with a *politesse* frozen on to ashen lips.

The husband turns to his wife with, "Survive me as long as possible, and enjoy yourself as much as you can."

Madame du Deffand, on the very day of the death of her lifelong friend, Hénault, appeared at a supper party. "Yes, he died to-day at six; otherwise I should not be here."

As in a famous picture, there were cards and company to the last round a modish death-bed. Better the great Change shall take us thus than "between four candles, and men dressed in black," and the awful prospect of a future retribution which an airy scepticism has helped us to deny in life, but which our sins and superstitions in dreadful league and covenant, make us now believe too well!

In what respect the present world of fashion is better than that queer old world is easy to see. In its awakened sense of duty to its children, its servants, and the poor, in its realization that each man was created not to Be but to Do, it is immeasurably superior to that gorgeous class, inimitably selfish and indifferent, who lounged and laughed in old Versailles. Though present-day manners have much less frill, that present-day morals are infinitely cleaner the most indignant moralist in a halfpenny paper could not deny. In this age the fashionable woman of tarnished reputation is at least an exception. Between 1745 and 1755 she was so much the rule that the Duchesse de Choiseul was remarkable among her sisters on account of her unblemished honor; and the noble and great lady, entreated to go to Versailles, if only to set an example there, was wise in her answer that the only good example she could set was to stay away. The literature which fashion now admires is as much better in point of decency as it is much worse in point of art than the literature Madame read at her toilet. The whole modern trend of thought is wholesomer and brisker; and if modern conversation is infinitely less clever, polished, and witty, its frank vulgarity is at least preferable

to the *doubles ententes* of Madame and her abbé.

But whether Society to-day can lay the flattering unction to its soul that it is in all important particulars materially better than that Society which brought the French Revolution and the downfall of monarchy, is doubtful indeed.

It was not only in old France that the great country estates, and the villages which owe their prosperity to the well-being of such estates, lay neglected and untenanted while the landowners "kept up their position" in town. In its mania for pleasure, in its ever-varying expedients for killing time, in its love of gambling, and that old, comfortable code of honor which makes it shameful to steal a loaf of bread when you are starving, but not to ruin a tradesman when you have ten thousand a year, Society now and then are not unlike. The extravagances of fashion which made women adopt coiffures "a little lower than the Monument" only seem absurd because they are *bygone* extravagances, and are very little more ridiculous than the extremes of a much later date. The whole fashionable world still sways before a new craze as a field of corn sways to a wind. People are still very serious over their amusements, and very amusing over their duty and their career. They still discuss with an amazing freedom the diseases of the body and the most sacred feelings of the soul, and if reverence had no place in the eighteenth century, neither is it a characteristic of the twentieth. Then it was the fashion to talk of the simpler life in rooms replete with every extravagant refinement of luxury—and to end in talk. And this happens even to-day. Then it was *de rigueur* to have no religion, and now to have a new, special pet one every two or three years—with results not dissimilar. It was then the fashion to hide from the

thought of death, and to look at life as a series of amusing hours, and as a great whole—never. Is it sometimes so still? One wonders.

That the Nemeis which overtook the old *régime* is in the least likely to overtake society now, no sane person can suppose. But now, as then, each man shall pay his price. The constant pur-

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suit of gain and pleasure brings him the dissatisfaction and the eternal ennui it brought old France; while he misses for ever that consciousness of duty done, of powers developed, of help afforded, which alone can make him face with tranquillity the ironies of life, the irreparable robberies of death, and the Great Unknown beyond it.

S. G. Tallentyre.

BEAUJEU.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BLOOD OF THE MARTYRS.

Guldford town was dark and silent. It was past nine o'clock, and even the naughtier taverns were going to bed. Round to the slippery kidney stones of Quarry Street clattered M. de Beaujeu and Mr. Healy, Mr. Healy leading a third horse which objected to turning on the greasy hill. "Do you not like it?" Mr. Healy mutters, "Begad no more do I. Come on!"

Where the Castle keep towered above them in the gloom they halted, and Beaujeu sprang down and thundered on a door in the wall. Mr. Healy knotted three bridles to a spike. A red face appeared at a grating. "Who be you? Want a lodging?"

"In the King's name! An order from my Lord Sunderland," said Beaujeu, and held up before the grating a paper with a big red seal. The bolts groaned and the door fell open.

"Who be you?" says the gaoler, holding his lantern to Beaujeu's face.

"Apparitors to the High Court—Jeremy Marsh and Vincent Nicholl."

"Humph. Well, and the devil has a plenty fine names too. And what be your business, Mr. Jerry?"

"Order for an Interrogatory," says Beaujeu.

"And what like fowl be he? Well, come your ways in, my nabs. Apparitors, be 'e? Lord love me! Have ye heerd now as the devil be christening hisself Beelzebub? He, he. Come your ways." Mr. Healy coughed and nudged Beaujeu as the door was shut behind them. Beaujeu shrugged his shoulders. They went after the gaoler down a small rough passage, while before them his lantern quivered like a will-o'-the-wisp in the gloom. "Mind your feet, my nabs. The beetles be slippery when you squash them. Yes, I thought as ye 'ld hit your heads theer. He, he. And theer again, my nabs. Now here we be, and let me see your order." They were in a little square room used by master gaoler for all the needs of life, to judge by its furniture, infrequently cleansed to judge by its smell. Mr. Healy pressed with both hands a kerchief to his delicate nose. "Lord love ye, and this stink be mild beside the prison, too," says the gaoler, holding out his hand for the order. Beaujeu gave it and put his hands inside his cloak to ease his sash. Mr. Healy, still holding his kerchief, moved to open the window, and so came close behind master gaoler. Master gaoler was examining the seal when Beaujeu's hands flashed out of his cloak; he flung a noose over the gaoler's head,

pinioned his arms and knotted it while Mr. Healy clapped the kerchief over his mouth and jammed a wedge hard between his jaws. Pouncing swift as a hawk, Beaujeu had another cord round his ankles before he thought of kicking, and made all fast. Healy lowered him like a log to the ground, and Beaujeu snatched the keys and went swiftly out. They were clearly gentlemen of experience.

Master gaoler stared with swelling eyes at Mr. Healy, who passed to the door and stood there on guard. The gaoler made a noise like to snoring and groaned faintly. "Indeed, my dear, I am not enjoying myself neither," says Mr. Healy. "And I would like to know what we are doing as much as yourself."

M. de Beaujeu was seeking the treason cell. A dull medley of oaths and ribaldry told him where the common prison lay, and beyond he found a stair, stumbled up and hit a door with his face. At last he found the key. As the door swung groaning a faint glimmer of light shot out across the darkness. On the dirty uncovered wooden table one candle flared and sputtered and smoked and stank. From the bed Silas Dane raised himself and peered with bloodshot eyes at the visitor. His face was haggard and yellow.

"Father!" M. de Beaujeu cried, springing to him and grasping his hand. "Father!" Silas Dane rose and moved unsteadily to the light. He held it aloft in the foul thick air and his hand shook.

"You? You?" he said quietly.

"Yes, sir, I thank God, in time. Let us go hastily."

"Go?"

"I have the gaoler bound and gagged and a horse for you at the gate. Come, sir, quickly. Each minute is perilous." He tried to drag his father to the door, but the old man withstood him.

"I thank you, I thank you. You did esteem it duty I doubt not."

"Ay, sir. Come quickly. We dare not tarry." The old man smiled.

"Nay, go you. I am earnest in prayer to thank my God that I am here."

"Here, sir? To die on the morrow? Dear sir, 'tis madness this! Pray you, come."

"Boy, I would not ask for mercy. Am I like to flee the penalty?"

"My God, must I force you?" cried Beaujeu. The old man drew himself up.

"Dare you?" he cried.

"Father, can I let you die?" Beaujeu groaned.

"Ay, boy, ay, for the cause of our God. Not without blood will the deliverance come. My heart rejoices that I am of the elect. The blood of the martyrs shall cry from the ground for vengeance on James Stuart and wake the dead spirit of this people. To them that suffer, a crown in the city of God." His eyes gleamed strangely. "Worthy, worthy is the Lamb. I do choose the better part." His voice was high and clear, and he smiled. Beaujeu stood staring, dazed. "Boy, boy, shall a man fear to follow in the path that women have trod? Nay, go you. You are young. For you God keeps other work. I shall be zealous in prayer for you this last night. Farewell."

"Father, for God's sake—" Beaujeu flung out his hands in despair.

"For God's sake I stay. May He have you in His keeping." And Beaujeu fell on his knees, muttering:

"Father—father—" The old man raised him.

"Nay, rejoice rather even as I rejoice. What better end for worn-out body than to die in the cause of God?"

"Then I stay. I stay," said Beaujeu, through his teeth.

"Nay, not that. Not that." Beaujeu faced him stubbornly. "I bid you go, boy."

"God! Do not make me a coward, sir!"

"Coward?" the old man laughed. "Would a coward be here? Nay, go you. Still the Beast is with power. There needs who shall fight him. Fight! Fight! Go, boy. And now farewell—I thank you, I thank you. Go. You are—truly—mine own son." With gentle force he drew Beaujeu to the door, who caught his hand and kissed it and groaned. His father shut him out in the dark.

Beaujeu stumbled on through the darkness, falling, rising again, careless as a madman. Speedily he came upon Mr. Healy, and Mr. Healy, amazed at his reeling gait, his wild eyes, caught his arm, and muttered:

"Man, where is he?"

"He would stay," said Beaujeu.

"To be hanged. Sure, 'tis an original taste," says Mr. Healy. Beaujeu broke away from him and staggered on. Mr. Healy jumped to the gaoler, whose eyes were now like to come out of his head. "Now, my dear, consider," says Mr. Healy, wagging a finger at him. "There is no poor soul that we will be taking from you. We have done, do you see, just nothing at all. In two minutes you shall, if you please, be raising alarms, but we will be gone, and you would but tell your friends that you have let yourself be bubbled. Do you perceive? If you do, wink for me, my dear." The gaoler laboriously winked. "Sure, 'tis worth a guinea to see your agility," says Mr. Healy, put a guinea on the table, stooped and sliced the bonds on master gaoler's ankles and lifted him. "On your left front—march! 'Twill be healing to your stiffness. Oh, sure, you will see your guests to the door"—as the gaoler resisted, Mr. Healy wrapped him in a mighty arm and bore him along. "Sure, 'tis narrow for two. I'm grazing you? Begad, I am flaying myself." They came to the open door,

the keys were still in the lock, Beaujeu was in the saddle waiting. Mr. Healy cut free the arms of the gaoler, who jerked the gag from his mouth at once and fell a-coughing.

"No thanks now, my dear," says Mr. Healy, pushing him in: "'tis polite, but superfluous," and he shut the door and sprang to his saddle. "And where is it now, Beaujeu?"

"Back to the inn," Beaujeu muttered. Back they went and roused the landlord, to whom, since amazement loomed behind his politeness, Mr. Healy courteously explained that M. de Beaujeu had had a fall, and was too shaken to go further on his journey. The landlord bustled monsieur to his bedroom, and there commiserated him at length, while Beaujeu stared through him with wide unanswering eyes. When at last the two were left alone:

"Sure, Beaujeu, 'tis all very dramatic, but a trifle confusing to me," says Mr. Healy. Beaujeu laughed.

"Ay," he said, "ay," and laughed again. Mr. Healy resigned the riddle and went philosophically to bed. And Beaujeu sat all night wide-eyed, torturing himself with imaginings of the morrow.

CHAPTER VIII.

A FAMILY AFFAIR.

M. de Beaujeu, haggard, dull-eyed, made a breakfast of ale, and the landlord counselled him a surgeon.

"I shall find my own cure," said Beaujeu. The landlord hoped indeed that mossos would do so, and was surprised by a laugh.

Beaujeu went to the window, and stood looking out on the steep street, while Mr. Healy ate heartily. He was biting his nails when Mr. Healy joined him. "Begad, is it a holiday?" cried Mr. Healy amazed, for there were scores of people hurrying up the hill, a throng wondrous in a tiny town, strapping lasses and lads sunburnt and

ruddy, in rough gray frieze, and their clogs clattered for their haste, and all were mightily gay with knots of red ribands and shrill in laugh and chatter. "Is it a holiday, my lass?" says Mr. Healy to the waiting maid.

"Aw no, sir, 'tis a hanging." Mr. Healy took out his pipe.

"The devil!" said he. "And you would be giving your eyes to see it, eh?"

"Aw, sir, I be going, I be going," she cried, and scurried off. Beaujeu's eyes gleamed as he watched.

"Well, will you follow the lady?" says Healy, with a chuckle and a wave of his pipe.

"I?" Beaujeu laughed.

"Sure, and I have no taste for cold meat neither," said Healy, and fell to sucking his pipe. Beaujeu stared at him.

Then there rose on the air a dull roar. The folks in the street began to run. Beaujeu shook and caught at the sill, and his knuckles grew white, his arm quivered with the grip. The roar endured a while and was hushed, while they heard only the noise of those who ran to be in time for the death. Mr. Healy was gazing in wonder on emotion visible in his friend. The noise in the street grew fainter: the last comers had come and there was silence.

Then rose a louder roar, and grew and grew, broke into volleys of cheers and yells and still endured. Beaujeu's broad chest was heaving and his lips were white. Healy heard him groan. A little boy came running down the street, then others close upon him. A woman screamed from a window:

"Be they have hanged he, Willyum?"

"Naw—did cut off he's head."

"Might so well have bided at home, then. Come in, ye little houn'."

Beaujeu's hand let go its grasp, and he reeled against the wall gasping. Mr. Healy arose, and—

"Why, what is ailing you now?" he said. "The poor devil is out of his pains."

"He—he was my father," Beaujeu gasped. Mr. Healy dropped his pipe and came to put his hand on the quivering shoulder. Beaujeu flung it off and turned with eyes ablaze in his haggard face. "My father, you understand? My father!" Mr. Healy bowed his head. Beaujeu's face was not for a friend to see. Then Beaujeu caught his shoulder roughly. "Healy—you heard the tale yesterday—his brother—my uncle—you see? Will you come?"

"Why then?"

"To hang him." Healy started back and stared at him. "Will you come?" cried Beaujeu fiercely.

"By God, I will!" said Mr. Healy slowly, looking into his eyes. Beaujeu clapped his hands and demanded the reckoning and his horses.

Down the hill, and by devious lanes shunning the sight of that bloody market-place, M. de Beaujeu went out of the town. Once he laughed: "Healy, I came to see my father and my uncle. I shall have seen them both."

"You will be proud of your father," said Mr. Healy with a keen glance. Beaujeu frowned. They came to the wider London road at last, and trotted on between the brown bracken. The blue deep-bosomed downs close above them barred their view on one side, while on the other tilth and meadow and moor lay dark and flat as far as the sky. Soon they wheeled round to a hollow lane where the dead leaves stank, then came quickly to the sunlight and clean air again and passed by a gray rubble lodge to the rolling turf of Sir Matthew's park. A horseman passed them going the other way, and Beaujeu eyed him keenly. But face and figure were hidden under a cloak and he rode at a gallop.

"'Tis not my uncle," said Beaujeu, "my dear uncle."

"Sure, and it might have been simpler if he were." Beaujeu laughed.

"No. It would have relished less. Out of my dear uncle's own room opens a secret chamber. None know the trick of it but we of the Dane blood. Better men than my dear uncle have lain there *perdus*. We will take him there. When I undo the door he may guess who I am. That should comfort him." Again Healy looked at him sharply.

"Well! 'Tis for your father," he said at last.

"What do you mean?"

"Just that," said Mr. Healy.

But when they came to the mellow-red walls of Send Place the butler told them that Sir Matthew was gone to Bourne. Beaujeu, wheeling round, muttered to Healy, "Already!" and laughed.

"Aceldama!" said Mr. Healy. Beaujeu laughed again.

"Was Judas the brother of Christ?"

They rode on a while before:

"You hold to it, Beaujeu?" said Healy.

"Does he not ask for a hanging?" cried Beaujeu.

"Sure, 'tis a very foul knave," Mr. Healy confessed. "But 'twas not a gentleman did the hanging for Judas." He looked at Beaujeu. "Still, if your father desired it—," and he shrugged his shoulders.

"What do you mean?" cried Beaujeu for the second time.

"Did he?" said Mr. Healy. Beaujeu bit his lip.

They rode on silently, and Beaujeu slackened his pace, went out of the park by the river gate, and splashed through the ford into the dark grass of Woking common-mead. Then on past the gray church and up the hill to the bare dark moor, where the villagers were chopping dry furze for the winter fires. Beaujeu drank the smell of the heather while Mr. Healy conceived that he had come upon the

abomination of desolation, mile upon mile of billowy barren land with a clump of firs in the west, dark and gaunt against the golden sky.

There came a cottage or two with a scrap of garden stolen from the heath, then stony brown fields, outposts of the cornland, and then, as they dropped down the hill, the green valley meadows. With the red roofs of the village in view, and the slim church spire, they turned away to Bourne Manor, hidden behind great oaks in a dell of the park. There was no sign of life. The little casements amid the ivy were shuttered, and for long no one answered Beaujeu's rapping on the door. Came at last an old dame unknown, who told him sourly that Sir Matthew was in the orchard ordering the setting of new trees. Beaujeu laughed. Tying their horses by the door, they went round the house, and on their way met a pair of gardeners.

"Yes, sir, in the orchard he be," says one to Beaujeu's question. "Ha' just bid we go."

Behind the tall yew hedge Beaujeu checked and gazed. There was his uncle, plump, swarthy as of old, but with him a younger man taller than he, who was crying:

"I am come, sir, to learn if this damned tale be true. Will you tell me?"

"My dear lad, my dear lad," said Sir Matthew feebly, and the two voices were very like. Then as the younger man turned to face him and showed his face to the sun,

"My God!" Beaujeu muttered, and caught Healy's arm.

"'Twill be the gentleman's son?" Healy whispered, Beaujeu nodded. "Now will we be hanging his father before his face?" And Beaujeu, staring at them, muttered:

"No . . . no . . . not that."

"Will you give me an answer, sir?" cried the son.

"Now wait," says Mr. Healy, "wait!" to Beaujeu, and strode out across the grass, leaving Beaujeu lurking. "Sir Matthew Dane?" Sir Matthew started round. "Sure, your conscience is quick this morning. Sir, I am grieved to tell you that your brother has died like a gentleman. Ay, it will be most distressing to you—" as Sir Matthew became pale yellow. "But I am charged to bear to you fervent congratulations on your ingenious devices."

"F-from whom, sir?" Sir Matthew stammered.

"Sure, from the devil," says Mr. Healy.

"Sirrah—sirrah—" Sir Matthew cried. Mr. Healy approached him.

"Do you desire satisfaction of me?" he asked, and his breath beat upon Sir Matthew's cheek. "Begad, I am desirous myself." He flashed out his sword. Sir Matthew started back. Mr. Healy laughed.

"Sirrah, I am an old man, else——"

"But, begad, here is a young one!" Mr. Healy swung round upon his son. "Will you fight, sir, will you fight for the father that's Judas to his brother?"

"Sir, will you give him the lie?" Jack Dane cried to his father. "Did you betray my uncle?"

"I did my duty to my King," said Sir Matthew, not without a snuffle. "I would to God, my dear boy, this grievous burden had fallen on another." His son flung away with a laugh of contempt—then came upon Mr. Healy's steady eyes and stood a while staring.

"I cannot meet you in this cause, sir," he said in a low voice. Mr. Healy slapped his sword home and turned on Sir Matthew:

"Mr. Judas," says he, "I envy you your proud joys at this present." Sir Matthew was gasping in short breath.

"Have you shamed me enough, sir?" Jack Dane muttered flushing. Mr. Healy made him a bow.

"Sir, 'tis not you that are shamed," said he. "Sure, you are true kin to the man that died."

"I do not forget it, sir," said the lad proudly.

"He would ask you no more. He nor his friends."

"You were of them?"

"I am friend to all of his, sir. James Healy, your obedient." They bowed to each other.

"May I beg—will you wait me at the Red Barn Inn, Mr. Healy?"

"'Tis a pleasure," said Mr. Healy, and with that departed.

Behind the hedge Beaujeu held out his hand and the two men gripped. Then, as they rode away: "You were right, Healy," says M. de Beaujeu. "You were right."

"Begad," the merciful Mr. Healy gave a merciless chuckle, "there's worse things than a hanging." And he jerked a nod to the orchard where the son was left to deal faithfully with his ingenious sire. "But will you tell me now where we will find the boy's Red Barn Inn?"

M. de Beaujeu flushed very dark. He appeared to attempt speech and fail. He pointed with his whip.

Mr. Healy, observant, seemed to himself a man in a fairy tale, and came to the inn with anxiety as to whom his friend would be hanging now.

HEINRICH HEINE.

IN MEMORY OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH.

On February 17 died the singer of the "Buch de Lieder" and of "Roman-cero." Speaking of the manner of his death we can hardly make use of the phrase "he closed his eyes," for his malady had long since done this office and it remained for Death but to glaze the pupils beneath those drooping lids. Two days later he was borne from the mattress that had so long been his bier in the Rue d'Amsterdam to the stone vault at Montmartre. Not, indeed, as Schiller had been borne some fifty-one years before, at break of day and by the light of glimmering torches, but on a gray and cheerless winter's morn. Few followed the shabby hearse, and even those few seemed not to mourn overmuch. The millions to love him were absent from his grave—it could not be otherwise, for many were far away and most were yet unborn.

Since that time a new generation has arisen, a generation that recognizes in Heine one of the greatest poets of all times and of all lands; not that many may not yet be found whose hatred and abuse ring with a vindictive bitterness as though they still had power to wound and belittle the object of their spite. Even Heine's grave can be called no haven of rest; for though fifty years have come and gone since the day it closed above him, the wrangling still rages betwixt the dead man's friends and foes, if anything even more fiercely than when he, alive—aye, very much alive!—stood in the midst of the fray himself and dealt his straight blows with unflinching impartiality. Possibly there may be no more flattering form of "being remembered after death" than this! And Heine might at the present day still

have occasion to say of himself as he once did, "Ich werde begelbert und geschmüht, sogleich bin Ich." In-crepor, vituperor, ergo sum!

Heine's world-wide reputation appears to be taken as a "personal insult" by the German anti-Semites:—

Ich bin ein deutscher Dichter,
Bekannt im deutschen Land;
Nennt man die besten Namen,
Wird auch der meine genannt;

but more than this; for, not "im deutschen Land" alone, but wherever German poetry is known or read, his name is on the lips—the name which above all is a household word to every foreigner with pretension to culture and literary knowledge; and this again fires the vindictiveness of the Jew-baiters in Germany. For them, indeed, Heine was no German at all! Under the brand of "Jew" they would deny him even his right to a nationality; and his having received "baptism" adds nothing to his favor in their eyes. For them Heine is and remains an alien and an outcast, a disturbing element amid the choicer spirits of the land; and, in order that the "casting-out" may be even more effectually accomplished, they would deny him his royal right—the right to be called poet.

Let them rant! It is not in the power of such to detract the veriest atom from his undying fame: does not their impotent rage beating against that rocky eminence in the Rhine echo back in tumults of reverberating scorn, to the haunting metre of the wondrous "Lorelei"? Heine's mild and kingly "revenge" has been his marvellous and unconquerable dominion over the spirit of all the German-speaking people. What German youth or maiden can tell

the first throbs of their quickening love but in the simple eloquence of words Heine has given them? What German, when his heart is brimming with emotion, but will find the surest vent for his pent-up feelings in Heine's verses—nay, we might even say that no German can now write poetry without some faint reverberation of Heinrich Heine's incomparable music clinging to it in form or rhyme. Heine has stamped his own individuality upon Germany's lyric poetry. His touch is not to be lightly brushed aside. She still speaks the language he taught her, now more than two generations since; the "Jewish taint," if such it be, is therefore, it will be seen, ineradicable, and even the poets must "come 'to heel" would they express themselves in verse.

His influence on German prose was no less great than that which he wrought upon the country's poetry. Heine may be called one of the three moulders of German prose: Luther brought form and method into the language, Lessing contributed clearness, simplicity and a greater pliancy, but to Heine it is that the German tongue owes her rich color, her electrical force! Luther's "Bibel" we might fitly liken to ore—the bronze whereof great monuments are moulded; Lessing's "Laocoon," as also his "Hamburger Dramaturgie," are solid silver, fit ware to ornament the tables of the greatest patricians; but Heine's "Reisebilder" and incomparable "Lutetia," these are the finest gold and the rarest of precious gems—rubies and diamonds fit to deck the neck and arms of the loveliest of women.

When we set aside for the moment that princely pair of poets in Weimar, then no other has done a tithe of what Heine has done towards spreading the knowledge of Germany's literature beyond her frontiers. His position, indeed, is that of a German ambassador

to the nations of foreign lands, yet his own country disowns him! Not the people, be it said: they read him, buy him, laud him as no other poet has been lauded; but "official" Germany—that gang, so incurably smitten with the *folie de grandeur*—which, swarming here, there and everywhere, penetrates into the universities and the lecture-rooms, and permeates the Press, the histories of literature, the very encyclopædia.

The fanatics, bolstered up in their conceit by some nincompoops' theories as to the "mysteries of race," these inquisitorial believers in a religion of hate, have by their uncompromising attitude of scorn and disdain been responsible for the fact that Heine's country has up to now raised no monument to his name. Seven Greek towns dispute to this day the honor of having been "the birthplace of Homer"; and now some seven German ones—among them Berlin, Düsseldorf, Köln and Frankfort-on-the-Maine—are each vying for the honor of being known as the one that has refused to permit a statue being erected within her walls to the memory of Heinrich Heine, although his admirers have promised the ground for the same. Thus does modern Germany characteristically parody the ways of classic Greece!

The light in which Heine is regarded beyond his own country comes to one as something of a surprise. Licence is a thing ill-tolerated in the poet of lyric verse. Poetry indeed hardly bears the process of exportation. To be rightly esteemed it needs to be enjoyed in the land of its birth, like certain tropical fruits, would the full beauty of its flavor be rightly appreciated; and lyric poems, more than any other, have need of that language wherein they first found audible expression. So elusive indeed is its charm that it would seem to evaporate in the process of translation: the hidden music, the beauty of

the rhythm, the strong beat of the rhyme, things "half-expressed" which lurk within the veiled suggestiveness of words, all these are lost, for the reader fails to catch that other or "super" voice, so familiar to the native, which speaks like an intimate spirit to his soul. Thus do foreign or translated poems lose thousands of those ideas of association, suggestions; words fraught with a deep meaning to the country-born, which flash like sparks in a rekindled fire, renewing memories of childhood and of youth, associations such as make these poems a very part of the listener's own life. Shakespeare in Germany and Omar Khayyam in England, these two stand out as exceptions against this universal law; and to them may be added but one more name from among the poets of the whole world—that of Heinrich Heine.

Heine "asserts himself" even when translated; he exercises the same mysterious charm on the foreign reader, and though something of the full measure of his exquisite subtlety may be lost, there nevertheless will be felt an unfalling sense of his inestimable force and greatness. This is to a certain extent due to the circumstance that Heine's poems have, in almost every case, enjoyed competent translating; yet it is not entirely due to this reason, for Heine's lyrics owe their charm to more than their rhythm and beauty of form. The reason then must be sought for elsewhere, at the very heart of things, in the very quality, as well as in the capacity for feeling with which his verses abound. His lyrics quicken the soul apart from their sense of rhythm and their rhyme; they are universally understood, for they speak with Nature's own voices, like the plash of the rill, the rustle of woodland trees, like the whispering moan of the wind.

And yet this recognition in strange lands cannot indemnify him against

the disinheritance of his own Fatherland, nor can it make good the sins committed against Heine by his German slanderers.

Heine's story is a sad one from its beginning to its end. His life, his death, his posthumous fame, are alike interwoven with the black and the blood-red threads of suffering and pain. Heine is the prototype of the saturnine poet—to whom the sun never shone unclouded. All the sad traits of Keats, of Shelley and of Byron combined may be recognized in Heine, yet lacking those brighter touches we so constantly meet in them. He was not as young as Keats when he died, but he had to fight with poverty as Keats fought. He did not succumb to the hand of the murderer, or to a boating accident as did Shelley, yet to be paralyzed for years is more horrible than a short death-struggle amid the waves of the sea. He suffered social persecution, he writhed beneath the torture of unjust criticism, even as did Byron, and he had not the relief of such sovereign freedom as is the privilege of a rich English peer. Fate dealt him all the blows she can chastise poor humanity with. He loved his cousin—but by her, too, he was scorned; he loved his country, and he had to leave it. In order to follow the inborn yearnings of the poet he broke with his family, on whom he had been dependent. The German Bundestag interdicted all his books, even those which were at that time not yet written; thus stopping his only source of possible income. He sickened in the very blossom of life, and suffered for long years such tortures as canonized martyrs had only to endure for a quarter of an hour at a time. He felt all pain ten times more acutely than does the average human being, for his nervous system was ten times more highly organized; but his capacity to suffer was limitless. Such suffering was, however, insepara-

ble from the condition of his being. Fate treated him even as heartless fanciers treat the nightingale, blinding it in order that its song may be the sweeter. He knew it, and therefore did he say:—

Aus meinen grossen Schmerzen
Mach' ich die kleinen Lieder.

And the most touching thing of all is that in these "little songs" there is never a complaint—never a mention of those "great sufferings." And this is one of those traits which distinguish him from other poets whom life had treated ill; he neither storms nor rages, as did Leopardi; he does not sob or complain like Nicholas Lenau; seldom is he as mordantly satirical, as sneeringly contemptuous of life and the world as was Byron. He bears his fate like a Spartan, and his lips smile even while the pain rages like the tooth of some wild beast rending his flesh. He rises above his condition and regards himself with the contemplative pity of some wholly disinterested person. He consoles himself with the contemplation of an eternity in which man, with his short earthly span and all its ills, dwindles to nothing and is swallowed up. Only now and again does a bout of acute suffering draw forth a shrill cry of agony, and such a one is like a cry from hell. These are the cries that have gained Heine's poems the imputation of having something "devilish" about them. Yet is this but the revolt of the flesh against its serfdom to the soul—that master-soul that so quickly reduces the slave to slavery once more.

In speaking of his sense of humor Heine has observed that he "bore the tear of laughter in his armorial shield"; his wit is resignation tempered with melancholy, his *bons mots* variations on the theme "Vanity of Vanities."

Heine may at times have indulged in licence, but he is never gay. He sings

of love, yet sees the flood thereof stifled midst sands of forgetfulness and neglect. He rejoices in Life while he muses that in Death all will be ended. He gathers happiness in the blossom—

Wenn du eine Rose schaust,
Sag' ich lass' sie grüssen:

yet remembers at the same time that the flower will fade. In the spring he shudders at the picture autumn will present when following in its inevitable turn; and once, on contemplating a beautiful English girl, he was wretched at the thought of some possible shadow dimming the unsoiled purity of this angel. He never possessed that essentially animal attribute of being able to give himself up solely and entirely to the present—revelling in the very moment.

In the present the future was ever before him, and to him this meant "a fading and a passing away."

Nothing eludes the melancholy law of decay, not even the greatest subtleties, not even the exquisite and tender songs of Heine: those songs that stir every young soul untainted by the poison of the anti-Semites—words which, rising from some unknown depths, hold the reader spellbound, as caught amidst the enchantment of some spirit world. For poems, too, and most of all the tenderest of their kind, have but a limited span of life allotted to them. The language alters, and in a few centuries its past form has become a strange tongue to the living, and then the poems attract only the attention of the scholar—as constituting interesting subjects for study and investigation. They then have come to resemble those Pompeian loaves of bread: once toothsome and juicy nourishment fit for the living, but now the petrified and utterly unenjoyable substance seen in the show-cases of the museum at Naples. Yes! "John Anderson, my jo, John," "Laise zieht

durch mein Gemüth," "Ueber allen Gipfeln ist Ruh!" all these will some day be mere show-pieces fit for the museums—even as Walter von der Vogelweide's "Unter den Linden, auf der Weide" has come to be. Translations and commentaries galore there will be, trying to conjure up their lost life

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and charm, to breathe warmth into the mummified remains, but the make-believe will impose on very few for, alas! lyric poems are also "writ in water."

These are melancholy thoughts—but they come of themselves when a man busies himself with the poor—great—Heinrich Heine.

Max Nordau.

A VESTAL MOTHER.

It was Orange Fair Day in Fronford. The streets of the little town were full of farmers from the surrounding districts doing brisk business with their neighbors. Not that their mode of procedure would have commended itself to a city dweller. Such an one might have been inclined to scoff at the groups of men standing with their backs to each other, and conducting their bargaining by means of slow and meditative questions, interspersed with nods and gestures scarce to be comprehended save by a native.

Down the hill leading to the Market Place came a man dressed in a sober suit of black, and thereby distinguished from the men in brown checks and shepherd's plaids, whose gaudy red-and-orange colored ties showed up their ruddy faces most effectively. Richard Thatcher's tie was white, an extravagance he had permitted himself since his retirement from farming, after careful consideration of the apparel of his Fronford neighbors. As he had discarded his farmerly clothes, so also he would fain have lost the exuberant redness of his jolly countenance, and in that case his likeness to his brother Thomas would hardly have been apparent, for he was made on a smaller scale. Amongst the groups in the market Thomas's huge frame towered commandingly, and his hearty laugh rang out again and again before he caught sight of Richard and hurried to meet him. Although well

over sixty, Thomas still kept on his farm up in the Mendips—a proceeding which Richard, aware that he had given up his own chiefly through the solicitations of his daughters, characterized with some irritation as "voolish!" This difference of opinion did not prevent the brothers from being good friends, however, and they met one another smiling broadly.

"How be 'ee, Dick?" said bluff Thomas, clapping his brother on the back. Thomas always seemed to need some such physical outlet for his overflowing spirits, and the smaller, more decorous Richard would not have done without that smack, although it made him wince.

"I be well, Thomas," he replied; "how's Lydia?"

Thomas's face clouded. "Well, now," he said, "I did want to talk to 'ee 'bout that—Lydia's turble poorly; do 'ee think Sally 'ud lend I one of her girls fur a bit? I cud take her back wi' me this a'ternoon. I've a been thinkin' o't fur a good bit, and to-day I come to a decision. Lyddy don't know as I meant to ask 'ee, in course; 'ee do remember as her don't care fur folks to be visitin', but if I took one o' t' nieces back, I b'lieve her's be reëll glad to see 'em. What do 'ee zay?"

"Maybe, maybe!" said Richard—his tone was dubious; "we cud spare t' maids right enough, and I be zure you're welcome, Thomas, but 'tis the

maids themselves I be thinkin' on: women be contrary, do 'ee zee?"

"Aye, aye," said Thomas heartily, "that they be, bless 'em! If your girls won't come, Dick, they *won't*, in course; but just ask 'em, will 'ee? Remind 'em 'at their aunt be all alone up to Corner Point, wi' no one but I to prevent her broodin' and broodin' about t' chield we lost; appeal t' their hearts, Dick, and they bean't Thatchers if they don't all on 'em want to come!"

The brothers parted chuckling: their belief and pride in the womenkind of the Thatcher family was great, and it was not misplaced. When Richard returned to his home, his daughter Mattie ran away to pack up her things before her father had finished his garbled account of the meeting with her uncle, and Christine and Sarah each offered their services.

"I'm afraid you'll have a dull time, dearie," Mrs. Richard said when her daughter sat waiting for Uncle Thomas to fetch her; "but 'ee must remember 'at poor Lydia's ill, and not take it to heart if she be crabby. Her have had a lonely sort o' life up there on Mendip, never visitin' round, though that bean't *our* fault," she added in parenthesis. "I've asked her often enough; but I don't believe she've been away from whoam fur a night since her baby died—it did cut her up turble. If her weren't a sister-in-law I'd a'most say as it crazed her a bit, but I don't know about that. Anyway, you can't learn nothin' but good up to Corner Point, fur Lyddy has the daintiest ways about a house I ever *did* see, unless 'twere your own, Mattie!" the good old mother added tearfully. She was always reluctant to part with either of her girls, and she dabbled her eyes vigorously as she saw Thomas's gig stop at the gate. "Now, Mattie, my chield," she said, "wrap up warm; do 'ee take my fur cloäk now,—'tis sixteen mile to Corner Point Farm." She thrust an

antiquated garment into the trap beside her reluctant daughter, and stood on the step to wish her good-bye.

Mattie sat up in bed and listened intently. The partitions between the rooms in the old farmhouse were so thin that she must hear if she was wanted, and she had awakened imagining she heard footsteps. But rattling doors and windows, the sougning of the wind as it retreated to the valley over swaying trees and straggling hedges, only to renew the assault of the sturdy stones with furious ardor the next minute, were the only sounds apparent to her ear. She lay down again, scolding herself for being fanciful; but she had hardly had time to get sleepy before a sound, the sound of a trembling and hesitating footstep, faint but unmistakable, once more struck on her ear. She rose hastily and opened her door. Across the hallway an iridescent shimmer of moonlight gleamed through the uncurtained window at the end of the passage, obscured now and again by the clouds driven rapidly across the sky; the girl shivered with cold and nervousness as she raised her hand to knock upon the door next her own.

Possibly the noise she made was too slight to disturb the occupants of the room, for she received no reply, and growing desperate in the silence, with that intangible sense of being needed still upon her, she turned the handle of the door and spoke through the crack—"Aunt Lydia, do you want me?"

After standing for what seemed an unconscionable time with the door ajar, listening to her uncle's heavy and regular breathing, the sense of her own folly swept over her, and she crept back to bed.

"Of course Uncle Thomas would call me if Aunt were ill, or Aunt would ring her bell," she said to herself scornfully. "Are you," she asked, apostrophizing her own recumbent

form, "going to develop nerves at the age of twenty-three?" And still in scorn and shame she fell asleep.

When she awoke the gray wintry dawn was breaking in the sky, and she lay and stretched herself luxuriously for a few minutes before getting up, reviewing the events of the preceding day. It must have been the sight of her aunt's increased fragility which had made her so wakeful and fanciful in the night, she decided; it had been enough to shock any girl to come in and find a woman who had been apparently hale and hearty less than a year before, looking like a skeleton. "I knew she was ill," said Mattie to herself, "or I wouldn't have offered to come and look after her, but it did give me the creeps to see her like that!" She rose and began to dress, looking about her distastefully at the harsh red of the crockery and the fawns and browns of the wall-paper and bed-hangings.

"'Tis so homely as it *can* be!" she said, her pleasant face wrinkling in despair; how in the world I'm to stand it I can't see—there's no brightness anywhere." She glanced out of the window at the misty landscape: the bare bleak hillside stretching down to the valley, with no relief for the eye save an occasional tree or heap of gray stone, not even a shepherd's hut in sight. "I do wish we could *see* the village, 'twouldn't seem so desolate then," Mattie went on, her thoughts turning lovingly toward the home she had left,—the little red-brick villa where her old father and mother lived in comfortable retirement, and where a constant stream of passers-by filled the air with cheerful noises. "But, after all, no one *asked* me to come,—I offered to look after Aunt Lydia; 'tain't no one's blame but me own!"

She adjusted her collar, pinned on a scarlet bow, and ran down the stairs just as the maid-of-all-work rapped

upon the backdoor. Aunt Lydia had an invincible objection to "the girl" sleeping in the house, and as Mattie unbarred the heavy door to admit Pollie Saggs she remembered this with a smile. Aunt Lydia was reckoned "odd" in the family, and with all her sunny sweetness of temper and way of looking on the bright side of human nature, especially the human nature of "relations," Mattie could not but admit that the family was right in its characterization. She remembered almost incredulously—for she had a hospitable soul—that Aunt Lydia had not even appeared glad to see her on her arrival the night before. True, her manner had grown more cordial when she had heard from her husband that Mattie was a firm sleeper. "Her do zleep zo zound as a top," the old man affirmed emphatically; "once her head be on t' pillow her be *off*—bean't that true, my maid?" he questioned, screwing his eyes up in an energetic attempt at a knowing wink, and nodding his head at her to reply in the affirmative. He had even gone so far as to kick her gently under the table. He foresaw that her recently acquired notions of gentility would not admit of her agreeing to his assertions without reservation. In Fronford robust health is looked upon with disfavor, as a sign of inferior gentility. So under the stress of the pain in her ankle from Uncle Thomas's "gentle" kick, Mattie had answered sharply "that she slept better than most," adding a rider to the effect that she would be sure to hear Aunt's bell if she wanted her.

"In course, in course," Uncle Thomas had agreed loudly, "ye'll hear if I do *holler* to 'ee—bean't that zo?" with a facetious smile, and Mattie had laughed because she knew it was expected of her.

All this passed through her mind as she unbarred the door for Pollie and bade her hurry with the fire, because

she wanted to make some tea for the mistress.

"La!" said Pollie, with a grin, "this be ever zo good a grate if it be a little black 'un, it do keep in better in t' night 'an in t' day, I b'lieve,—it be al-lers a burnin' in t' mornin'." She hung her hat up behind the scullery-door and came into the kitchen, picking up the poker from a corner and marching forward to the old-fashioned range. "There!" she said triumphantly. In the bottom of the grate a small but bright fire glowed cheerily, and the young mistress and the maid held their chilled fingers over the grateful warmth with one accord. Then Pollie seized the kettle,—"*'Tis bilin'!*" she said laconically, but there was triumph in her voice. It was not her doing that the fire burnt brightly and the kettle boiled, but a kind of reflected glory fell upon her in showing off these well-behaved utensils to a stranger, and she appreciated the fact.

"Well!" said Mattie consideringly, "it's full early to rouse Aunt, I think, Pollie, I'll do up the parlor before I take up her tea: be quick over the grate in there, and you shall have a cup too,—it's a rare cold mornin'."

She looked round for the dust-pan and brush, and went into the front room. The tablecloth was rolled up in a carefully arranged mound in the middle of the sofa, and the highly polished surface of the mahogany table reflected Pollie's energetic movements as she unfolded dust-sheets and old newspapers, spreading them carefully over the furniture before she began to clear up the hearth. The precaution was hardly necessary, for everything in the room was a uniform shade of drab, but it did not strike Mattie as foolish: every careful housewife of her acquaintance did the same thing. It was an aphorism in Fronford that "good furniture ben't zo easy come by!" and dust was considered as deleteri-

ous to woodwork and tapestry as the moth to furs and blankets.

It was striking six o'clock when Mattie made her way upstairs with a cup of tea for her aunt. The gray light of early morning added no softening touch to the crude blues and reds and yellows of the staring Brussels carpet which made a narrow pathway up the broad shallow stairs. Mattie looked at it absently. She did not tread upon the carpet, because it was a new one, and not to be lightly used except by visitors, and she lifted her feet high and planted them firmly upon the slippery oaken flooring at the side, thinking meanwhile if it would be possible to persuade her aunt to stay in bed to breakfast. She knocked at the bedroom door, but receiving no answer, entered and walked toward the bed. Bed, was it called?—one might as truthfully describe that resting-place as a tent! Four thick wooden posts, one at each corner, made a firm support for the heavy canopy of red bombazine overhead, and bombazine curtains, tightly drawn on the poles stretched along under cover of the canopy, excluded all sight and overmuch air or sound from the occupants. To Mattie the bed was nothing unusual, many of the same kind are to be found in Somerset, and she drew the curtain on the far side with a cheerful "Good morning, Aunt."

"Good morning, dear," said Aunt Lydia in surprised tones.

Her voice was weak and fretful, but a pleased smile lit up her face as she caught sight of the tea-cup. "Tea?" she questioned reprovingly, holding out her hand.

Mattie laughed. "Of course," she said, "you are quite an *invalid*, Aunt Lyddy; if I'm to look after you I shall do what I've a mind to." She sat down on the edge of the bed and watched her aunt with kindly eyes. "You were mortal thirsty!" she said.

Lydia Thatcher put the cup down with a sigh and leant back on her pillows. She was very small and fragile as she lay there in her severely cut night-gown, her hair braided tightly in two hard knobs on her temples, where the blue veins showed through the transparent skin with painful clearness, and the purple shadows under the soft gray eyes heightened the effect of the bones protruding from the thin cheeks. She stretched out a hand like a little bird's claw and patted her niece's arm.

"I do get zo parched like by t' mornin'," she allowed.

"Do you sleep pretty fair, Aunt?"

"To be zure," Lydia said sharply; "why do 'ee ask?"

"Folk don't always when they're poorly," Mattie replied, suppressing her inclination to retail her experience of the past night from a quick intuition that it would bother her aunt. "Mrs. Willis—she lives next door to us down to Fronford—told mother that betimes she would never sleep a wink all night, and she looks real flourishing beside you, Aunt Lydia."

Mrs. Thatcher's face expressed a curious mixture of emotions. She would have given much to have been able to make Mrs. Willis's speech as nought by detailing her own symptoms, but something kept her silent: she turned on her side with a weary sigh. "It be turble cold," she said, with a shiver.

"That night-gown isn't warm enough for this weather," Mattie said practically, standing up and looking doubtfully around; "I'll bring you my dressing-gown." Her face took on an extra shade of pink as she made use of the unaccustomed word, but when she came back with the garment on her arm she explained its uses volubly.

"This is to slip on over a body's night-gown when you're cold or it's too much trouble to dress, Aunt Lydia.

Mabel Donne had one when she came to stay with us at Fronford, and I liked it, so mother gave me this for my birthday: being a present, you see, it didn't seem so extravagant, and 'tis very comfortable."

Aunt Lydia submitted to being helped into the warm garment with a pleased smile. It was one of those cheap flannel gowns, of a deceptive woolliness, with a large and weird pattern covering the whole, and she looked at it with admiration.

"'Tis most genteel, dearie!"

"Well! I must run now and see to the breakfast—Pollie can tell me all about it, can't she? I'll bring yours up for you, Aunt: I shouldn't come down for an hour or two if I were you, dear. Mrs. Willis says there's nothing like taking your breakfast in bed for strengthening you!" Mattie ran away chuckling over the success of that mention of Mrs. Willis.

As she sat at breakfast with her uncle in the comfortable sitting-room, having given him his second cup of coffee and watched him eat two platefuls of porridge and cream and then turn with avidity to the ham and eggs, she made an appeal.

"Uncle," she said, "I do wish you would send for the doctor to Aunt; she looks real bad, so pinched and all."

Mr. Thatcher put his heavily laden fork down upon the side of his plate and wrinkled his brows.

"Lyddy won't hear of 't," he said pathetically; "if 'ee cud persuade she to listen t' relison, my maid, I'd be mortal obliged. She did ought to have t' doctor, I knows, and he knows too, bother 'un! I've a met t' ould Doctor Smith twenty times or more in t' past month, and every time he do zay, 'And how's Mrs. Thatcher?' zo perllite 's possible, but a smillin' all over his face. It do zeem as if he do come my way o' purpose. I tell 'ee, Mattie, I cud skulk and run when I do see 'un, zo there,

But if Lyddy won't have t' doctor, her *won't*, and that's all there is of 't'"

He picked up his knife and fork again in dogged impotence and began eating.

"I'll see what I can do, Uncle Thomas," his niece said.

But as the days went by Mattie began to despair of persuading her aunt. The little woman had a fund of dogged obstinacy quite incredible to her more reasonable niece, and she listened to persuasion, argument, and entreaty with the same placid smile upon her face. It was the same with other things: Aunt Lydia had no belief in her niece's capability as a dairywoman. Housework and cooking she did very well, she admitted grudgingly, but butter- and cheese-making, no! She was quite unfit to be up, but she set her teeth and went through the dairy work every day, sternly showing Mattie each process, making up the golden butter into firm round pats, "as good, but not a bit better than I could make 'em myself," the girl told herself, half crying. Had she not been to a dairy school for a whole summer while her father was still farming at Crossfield? It was too bad to be shown every bit of the way, as if she had never seen a churn before. Mattie had much to put up with!

In addition to these minor ills she did not sleep well at night, often waking twice or thrice, convinced that she heard footsteps, and worried lest her aunt had overtaxed her feeble strength the day before and been taken ill. Once, the sense of hearing Aunt Lydia's voice and that feeble, trembling footstep outside her door had been so strong that she had risen and gone to their bedroom door, as on the night of her arrival, but, as then, no sound broke the stillness. Only, far back in the shadow of the long passage, she thought she saw a figure clad in dark and trailing garments move on toward

the backstairs, and only the remembrance of Mrs. Thatcher's ill-health prevented her from screaming aloud. She did not know how she got back to her room and to bed, and since then she had lived in terror of the lonely night and these mysterious footsteps. The old ghost stories she had heard in her childhood returned in added horror, and she could not get away from the weird fascination. Over their work she sounded Pollie about the authentication of the stories current in the village, and Pollie, quick to feel the vein of credulity in her hearer, launched forth with all a Somersetshire maiden's wealth of detail into many horrific tales.

On the second Sunday of her stay at Corner Point Farm, Mattie accompanied her uncle to morning church. The church stood at the extreme end of the village, and as she walked down the little street with bluff, hearty Mr. Thatcher, her quick ears caught the whispered remarks made upon her appearance by the villagers walking behind them, and her cheeks burnt hotly. At another time she would not have noticed it, for curiosity does not appear indecorous to a true Southerner; but her nerves were out of order after ten days of anxiety and comparative sleeplessness, and she felt inclined to cry. When her uncle whispered to her at the end of the service that he wished to consult the vicar about something and she had better "walk along t' whoam," she felt she could not face the ordeal again, and alone.

"Let me wait for you, Uncle Thomas," she replied earnestly; "I'll walk about in the churchyard,"—and the old man gave a pleased nod.

The churchyard was full of gray, moss-covered headstones, and amongst them a figure of an angel carved in white marble stood out vividly. Mattie wandered across to it, her admiration roused at once. Who could be

wealthy enough in the village to erect a marble headstone like that? "The folk must have been turble fond of him that's gone," she said.

The white marble angel was bending pitifully over a shield, and on the shield was written—

Sacred to the Memory of

TEDDIE,

THE DEARLY LOVED ONLY CHILD OF

THOMAS AND LYDIA THATCHER,

WHO DIED 17TH NOVEMBER 1879,

AGED 2 YEARS AND 3 MONTHS.

Mattie stood gazing in silence, full of inarticulate thought, at the words, until she heard a shout behind her and hastened to rejoin her uncle. His fat, jovial face looked a little worried, she imagined, as she walked beside him through the village; but his greetings were as cheery as usual, and he chose to be facetious over her pale cheeks.

"Grievin' fur thy young feller, bean't 'ee, my maid? La! now I thought that 'ud a bring t' roses to thee cheeks again,—they bean't haif zo comely when they'm white, my chield!" The kindly, rough old man continued in this strain until the ascent to Corner Point was half accomplished, and then he fell silent. The road wound round the hillside, now broad and firm and smooth, now a mere cart-track between spongy turf and tall brown bracken, on which the fine misty rain of early morning had *filmed* into a shining dampness. Now a sudden turn in the road would discover the tranquil village lying in the valley below; the forward slope of all the trees—bare and forlorn in their winter desolation—showing how the wind swept down the hillside and across the orchards in rough weather, and then with another turn all sight of human habitation had vanished, and they were alone in silence. Strange,

palpitating, profound silence to the stranger on these hills, but to one born and bred amongst them full of an eloquent homeliness, a sense of exquisite and befriending kinship.

After two such changes of scene as these, Thomas Thatcher heaved a sigh. He stopped and looked down at the village, and Mattie stopped too, casting an inquiring glance at him as he continued his way. When he at last spoke his voice was quiet and steady, but it had undergone some subtle change, so that the girl beside him felt uneasy. The gray canopy of cloud overhead, the brooding gloom of the distant shadows, the hollow echo of their footsteps and the sudden gusts of wind which tore past them heralding the coming storm, all presaged to her, in her nervous, unstrung state, some momentous disclosure. Even after Thomas had made his first remark, she waited with a disappointed sense that there must be more to follow,—something of deeper import than her uncle's question implied.

"Would 'ee like to hear 'bout our Teddie, my maid?"

The question was hardly necessary, a mere grace note of conversation as it were, for the idea of *not* desiring to know more of another person's concerns would have been incomprehensible to either of them.

He paused an instant, waiting for her reply, and then, his eyes fixed on the path before him and his hands thrust deep into the pockets of his overcoat, he began,—

"I sawed 'ee a lookin' at the bit o' carvin' we put up fur Teddie, and I were afraid 'at 'ee might ask your aunt about t' boy, and her couldn't stand that, do 'ee know. Her were always zo tender and fragile-like, Lyddy were; there was somethin' zo daintyish about her when I first clapped eyes on her 't made I feel zo heavy and plain 's a clown. I'd never a-thought

o' askin' her to have me but fur her elder brother; he kind of insinuated that she liked me, and I fell into the net real proper. 'I do care fur 'ee turble much, Lyddy,' I said; 'what do 'ee zay t' ut?' And she said, 'Thank 'ee, Thomas,' very faint and soft; but I never thought she didn't care fur I! They'd been on at her to whoam—her folk was real pushin', and none too well off—to take me, and there wasn't no one she liked better, so she gave in to 'em and we was married out to Balcombe Church. You would a liked to see her, Mattie! Oh! but she looked that pretty and delicate in her weddin' bunnet wi' t' marriage flowers on it and t' long veil hidin' her little white flice, and I put up a prayer all on a sudden 't I might make her happier than a maid ever were afore. It zeemed to me 't I cared fur her zo much 'at her *must* be happy. 'Tis strange though, a feelin' like that don't make a woman happy, do 'ee know, though at first did seem to I as it did. Lyddy were zo sweet and gentle it did seem like heaven to come back to the house, but I did *yearn* over her, fur I cud see she were pinin'. A'terwards, when Teddie were born, she did tell me all about it, how miserable she'd a been, and how she'd on'y wedded wi' me to please her folk. But I didn't zo much mind hearin' then, because Teddie brought all her love with him, love fur hisself and love fur me, pressed down and runnin' over,—a tremenjous heap o' love t' boy brought. And he were a fine youngster, Mattie, zo bright and zo knowin' and zo heavy, wi' golden curls all over his head shinin' like—like Lyddy's used to shine, and little fat hands to pull my beard wi'—"The old man heaved a long sigh and walked forward silently. Mattie, her eyes wet with tears, stole a hand through his arm and pressed it gently. The touch recalled her uncle to a re-

membrance of his story. "Well, well!" he said heavily, "he died, child, he died! In t' middle o' the night he got an attack o' croup, fightin' and gaspin' fur breath on Lyddy's knee. She were mad wi' terror and callin' to me fur hot water while I were a-tryin' to get t' fire lighted in t' kitchen. When I took her the hot water at last Teddie were dead; he might ha' been alive to-day if we'd had t' fire burnin' and hot water easy to get. Lyddy ain't never been t' same since; she've a worried more over the little things, and made me a'most angered sometimes, but her love ain't never failed me yet, Mattie, and 'tis that as matters most of all."

They were nearing the house now, and could hear the alarmed "cluck" of the hens in the farmyard as they ran wildly to escape being run over, as a light gig started away from the back-door and trotted down the hill.

"It be t' doctor," Mr. Thatcher ejaculated.

The driver of the gig pulled up as he neared them, and hailed Mr. Thatcher. "A word with you, Farmer," he called cheerily, but his face was grave.

Thomas dragged his niece forward with him; his ruddy face was gray and anxious, and the attempts he made to speak were futile, his tongue was hard and dry.

"Come, come," said Dr. Smith, "it is not so bad as that, Farmer Thatcher. Mrs. Thatcher did not call me in, you know, I have only been paying her a friendly visit; but I don't like her looks, Thomas, I don't like her looks. She ought to be in bed being 'fed up' with chicken-broth and jelly and milk and eggs, or one day she will be slipping away from us all. I'll look in again to-morrow and thoroughly examine her. Good-morning, Farmer."

He pulled at the reins and started off at a swinging trot down the hill, turning round in his seat in time to see

the old man running for the front door with Mattie behind him.

Within the house they found Lydia, dressed in her second-best black silk, with a gray shawl pinned across her chest and a capacious apron around her waist, helping Pollie to "dish up" the dinner. Thomas went up to her very tenderly, his great hands shaking as he held them out entreatingly: "Come along with me, my maid, come along with me, Lyddy,—Mattie 'ul see to they dishes!"

They got her to bed, somehow; and late that afternoon, when the shadows filled the corners of the big bed-chamber, and the fire threw brilliant flashes of light on to the dull walls and the patient face of the little woman in the big bed, she motioned to her niece,—*"Mattie,"* she said urgently, "you won't let the kitchen fire go out?"

"No, Aunt, no; I'll run down and see to it now, if you like." Mattie spoke soothingly, with the air of one humoring a loved child. "It is a splendid little grate," she continued; "there is always some fire alight when I go down in the morning, so you will be able to have a cup of tea in the night without any trouble; I'll bank the fire up well before I go to bed."

She kissed her aunt gently and left the room, and presently the two in the room above heard her poking the kitchen fire. Lydia turned to her husband with a strange smile, "She doesn't know, Thomas?"

"No one knows 'cept thee and me, my dear," he said gently. "'Tis our secret, Lyddy woman, 'tis our secret"; and she did not hear him sigh.

"I've been a-thinkin'," she said weakly, "'at I won't do it no more, Thomas. 'Twere just a fancy I had fur keepin' t' fire allers a-burnin' in memory o' Teddie; and it did zeem to catch hold o' me *here*, Thomas,"—she clutched at her thin breast,—*"until I cud no more help goin' down zo secret*

and quiet in t' night on purpose to tend to 't than—than thee cud help lovin' me, Thomas!" She smiled at him tenderly, "You've a been a patient man to me, my darlin'," she said, "and I *have* cared fur 'ee turble much; but I—I think I'll let t' fire go out now; Teddie won't be needin' it, do 'ee see, Thomas."

"Nay, nay, my woman," the old man said tenderly; "thee'll be about 's brisk as ever in a week or two. I'll keep Teddie's fire in by night—after all these years it 'ud be stoopid t' let it out because thee be feelin' poorly. I'll tend to 't fur thee, Lyddy dear."

He stooped over her eagerly, waiting for the word of thanks she had never failed to give him for any service rendered her in all their life together, and when it came he smiled, satisfied. Lyddy would be about again soon, surely; he watched her eat the corn-flour Mattie brought with a sense of relief. "Why, thee have got a real good appetite, my lamb!" he said.

And Lydia followed his movements with quiet eyes and smiling mouth, but the smile was pitiful.

Through the long hours of the night she lay sleepless beside the tired old man, listening to his breathing, and hardly daring to stir lest he should wake and reproach himself for resting while she was in pain. The events of her life passed before her rapidly, following close one on the other as her pain and weakness increased, until all other memories faded before that one, persistent and dominant, which had been nearest to her always—the night of Teddie's death! She could feel again the little form struggling and fighting for breath, and her own agony returned with the same sense of impotence. Was the fire burning, was there any hot water in the kitchen? With the question the old habit of years returned, and the childless mother arose and groped her way silently, slowly, and painfully down the familiar stairs,

Mattie had a strange dream that night: she was wandering round and round in a churchyard trying to find traces of some footsteps she could hear quite plainly,—soft, faltering footsteps like Aunt Lyddy's,—when some one came behind her and shouted—

"Mattie! Mattie!" She sprang up, trembling, hardly conscious for an instant, so vivid had been her dream, that the shout was real: in half-strangled tones she called, "Yes, Uncle," and ran down the stairs to the kitchen. It was still quite dark, and the fire glowed but dully in the grate, casting a faint red tinge of color upon Aunt Lydia's placid face where she lay upon the hearth-rug. Her hand still clasped the poker, and Thomas pointed to it wildly. "Her comed down to make up t' fire; her has allers done it every night since Teddie died, and now she be dead too. Oh, Lyddy, Lyddy!"

He lifted the still form tenderly in his arms and carried his burden to the sofa in the parlor, arranging the cushions for his wife's head as he had arranged them for her while alive; then he walked heavily from the room, and Mattie heard him shuffling about up-

stairs, opening and shutting drawers noisily.

It was growing light when he came down again, and as he entered the parlor a pale beam of sunlight stole through the side window and fell across the table. Thomas unfolded the bit of tissue paper he held in his hand and laid a tiny golden curl in the patch of light, gazing at it with dull eyes ere he turned to the couch.

"Thee'll give me a scrap o' thy hair, my woman?" he said, bending over his wife's body and waiting as if for her to speak. He severed a lock from the back of her neck and laid it beside the curl on the table: it looked dull and insignificant by comparison.

But the old husband thought otherwise; he pointed to it with a smile. "I told 'ee as her hair were gold, didn't I, my maid? Just wait until t' sun zhines a bit stronger and 'ee'll zee fur theeself!" He clasped his wife's hands around the baby curl he had taken such pains to find. "'Twere Teddie's!" he said briefly. Then with a face of utter misery he shuffled away to the kitchen to poke the fire. It had burned itself out.

Blackwood's Magazine.

COWPER.*

The simultaneous appearance of two excellent editions of Cowper's poems may be taken as a proof that the most pleasant of all our poets still has readers enough to keep his memory green. All varieties of those readers should find satisfaction in one or other of these books. In both the text has been very carefully edited. Both contain notes short and to the point and mainly

concerned with the text; and both omit the translation of Homer. But for this omission, they are as complete as they well could be, and contain one or two poems never printed before, besides several not contained in any previous collected edition. Mr. Milford's edition is a wonderful little book for the price; Mr. Bailey's is all that the most exacting lover of Cowper could wish for. It contains thirty-five unpublished letters from the poet to John Johnson and to Joseph Hill, some very well chosen illustrations, and an admirable critical and biographical introduction. The letters, though they contain no new

* "The Poems of William Cowper," Edited, with an introduction and notes, by J. C. Bailey. (Methuen. 10s. 6d. net.)

"The Complete Poetical Works of William Cowper." Edited by H. S. Milford, M. A. (Frowde. 2s.)

information, and are not usually in the poet's most familiar vein, yet have the charm that he never failed to put into anything that he wrote when his mind was sound. There are one or two passages in them which may move the reader to gentle laughter. Thus Cowper had been asked, apparently, to send his autograph to a certain Sir John Fenn and his wife. He was too polite to send nothing but an autograph; and this politeness caused him some misgivings, which he expresses thus:—

I have taxed my wits for six complimentary lines on Sir John Fenn and his lady. Of the latter you speak decidedly, giving me to understand that she is everything a panegyrist could wish; but concerning the merits of the former you are so silent that I stand in doubt whether I ought to compliment him at all. Yet to present him with my name and handwriting to be inserted in his collection, taking at the same time no notice of him, but of his wife only, would be a palpable affront. I have therefore found it necessary to make them equal sharers in my praise. But praise I have none for the underserving. I have praised none such yet, and, knowing them to be such, I never will.

He sends the complimentary verses, however, which run as follows:—

Two omens seem propitious to my
fame,
Your spouse embalms my verse, and
you, my name;
A name, which, all self-flatt'ry far
apart,
Belongs to one who ven'rates in his
heart
The wise and good, and therefore; of
the few
Known by those titles, Sir, both yours
and you.

So politeness gained the day; but Cowper would be consoled to know, per-

haps, that the panegyric on Sir John Fenn has not come down to us without the necessary warning. In another letter he shows some diverting resentment against a Bishop, his relative, who had, apparently, refused in some way to assist Johnson to his ordination. "Now I see it to be well that Bristol would not comply; yet, though his non-compliance was evidently providential, that by no means excuses him. It was unfriendly to me, and by this time he probably knows that I account it so." These are only the smallest trifles, yet Cowper both in verse and in prose, intentionally and unintentionally, had the art of making trifles pleasant and significant. Among the illustrations to Mr. Bailey's book are two designs by William Blake of "Winter" and "Evening," never made public before. The figure of Winter is one of the finest of his inventions outside the illustrations of the book of Job and very much in the style of those illustrations.

Mr. Bailey, though a thorough admirer of Cowper, begins to praise him with an artful modesty that recalls Gibbon's panegyric of Julian the Apostate. His intellectual capacity was far below that of some poets who are now forgotten. He was the poet, not of the world, but of a particular sect now almost extinct. What originality he had was caught up by greater men and is superseded by their works. Thus he states the case against Cowper, as it might be put. But that case can be answered without much difficulty, and on some points by a flat contradiction. As for Cowper's intellectual capacity, he never set up to be a clever man. He was too timid by nature to speculate about deep matters, and it was only brain-sickness that set him speculating about his own salvation. But no man without great intellectual capacity can write great verses, and Cowper wrote "The Loss of the Royal George" and the lines "To Mary"

—to mention nothing else. Again, it was only when he was brain-sick or uninspired that he became the poet of a particular sect. Wordsworth, when uninspired, became the poet of the Wordsworthians, a sect still more narrow and artificial; yet Wordsworth, when a poet, wrote for the world, and so did Cowper. There is nothing to remind us of the Rev. John Newton in a great part of "The Task" or in a hundred little poems with a delicacy equal to Prior's or a sadness more moving than Wordsworth's. As to his originality, it was his own, and could not, therefore, be superseded. When you have read Wordsworth you have not read Cowper. Wordsworth could write—

My apprehensions come in crowds;
I dread the rustling of the grass;
The very shadows of the clouds
Have power to shake me as they
pass.

But Cowper could write—

And should my future lot be cast
With much resemblance of the past,
Thy worn out heart will break at last.

There is nothing in the Wordsworth that makes the Cowper less moving. Wordsworth uses a greater variety of means to move us. All the forces of nature seem to take part in the sorrow which he expresses. He has gathered the whole universe into his tragedy, and his Margaret is a figure upon an infinite stage. Cowper's grief is all his own, and seems to be confined within narrow walls. It is one particular man speaking in his own particular circumstances of time and space. Yet this particularity touches us more closely than Wordsworth's wider appeal to our imagination. Margaret is a type of all mothers who have lost their sons, and she sets us thinking of maternal love in general and of all the sorrows and anxieties that beset its

tenderness. But Cowper sets us thinking of the sorrows of an individual man whom we seem to see before us and to have known all our lives; so that the trouble which has come upon him moves us as if it had come upon some one in our own household, and as if we were constant witnesses of all its symptoms.

Cowper, indeed, is a kind of portrait painter in much of his best work, whether he writes of Tiney the hare, of the country about his home, of his own childhood, or of some trivial event like the killing of that viper which threatened his cat. Thus his poetry is not much colored by the age in which he lived, except in its language. He had the luck to live in a time which liked familiar poetry, and so he was encouraged to write about the familiar things which inspired him; but, whatever age he had lived in, he would probably have written about such things, if he had written at all. Ideas were nothing to him, objects and affections everything. Hence we are in danger of doing him an injustice if we think of him historically as one of the first agents of the return to nature, as a poet mainly interesting because he was the first to do what his successors did better. The poems of Cowper are not historical documents at all. They have nothing to do with any tendency. They were no more produced by any contagion of new ideas than the novels of Jane Austen. As Mr. Bailey says, "Probably no poet, in all the history of the art, did so little casting about for a subject. He just took what came." That is to say he wrote about what he saw and knew, and what interested his timid, curious, affectionate mind, and wrote always in the language that came easiest to him. Thus he was certainly deeply in love with his cousin Theodora Cowper, and kept her long in his heart. Yet his love poems might easily be mistaken by a

careless reader for mere conventional exercises, since they are usually written in conventional language and make no profession of strong passions. That is to say he wrote them in the style of his time. But none the less he expressed his real feelings in them, and the best of them are as full of his character as any of his letters. Take, for instance, the poem called "The Symptoms of Love." It is written in a rhythm that has been most commonly used for professions of passion which the poet does not expect to be believed; and yet Cowper, using it, makes us believe in his love and at the same time makes us feel that to express that love in such a style was entirely characteristic of him.

And lastly, when summon'd to drink
to my flame,
Let her guess why I never once men-
tion her name,
Though herself and the woman I love
are the same.

This verse reads as if it recorded a real incident, and we cannot but smile at the thought of Cowper suddenly summoned to drink to his flame in some incongruous company, and shyly and sentimentally doing so. Thus it is that the man is always showing through his poems and that even the most conventional of them seem to have the interest of an old family relic.

Mr. Bailey holds rightly that Cowper's religious delusions had very little to do with his poetry. Cowper, when he was well, had a most simple, wholesome, and cheerful mind. It was quite foreign to his nature to exercise himself with the great problems of existence, and his doing so was only a symptom of disease. There are some writers, such as Poe, who seem to be morbid in the very character of their minds, and we must consider their morbidity as one of the elements of their art. Cowper's religious mania

had no more to do with his poetry than if it had been a stomach-ache. He was religious by nature, but in a child-like, clinging way, and the fearful creed which terrified his imagination came upon him like a nightmare upon a child. Yet Mr. Bailey is inclined to think too little of the Olney hymns. He says, for instance, that Cowper, as a hymn writer, never approaches the fine poetic quality of Newman, Keble, or Ellerton. These writers were all as incapable of writing "Hark, my soul! it is the Lord" as of writing "The Loss of the Royal George."

Mine is an unchanging love,
Higher than the heights above,
Deeper than the depths beneath,
Free and faithful, strong as death.

Only the fact that we are not accustomed to think of the most familiar hymns as poetry at all can prevent us from seeing that this is great poetry. The very rhythm of the first line must have sounded as strangely, when it was written, as the rhythm of some of Blake's first poems. Even such an unattractive hymn as "There is a fountain filled with blood" contains a verse that only a poet could have written—

Then in a nobler, sweeter song
I'll sing thy power to save;
When this poor lisping, stammering
tongue
Lies silent in the grave.

Yet it is true that some of the Olney hymns, being mere statements of dogmas which Cowper believed with his mind but not with his heart, are perfunctory and dull. A good many of them were written to please the Rev. John Newton, a divine of whom Mr. Bailey speaks too patiently. He was zealous, no doubt, but his zeal probably did less harm when he was the captain of a slave-ship than when he was converted and took orders; for

Cowper was not his only victim. He says, himself, that his preaching caused near a dozen truly gracious people to become disordered in their heads. No one has a right to misunderstand humanity and religion as much as he misunderstood them; and good intentions excuse him no more than they excuse Torquemada.

Mr. Bailey is quite just to "The Task." It is, he says, Cowper's greatest achievement, not merely the achievement he meant to be his greatest. There are very few of our poets who have written long poems that are really interesting to read. "The Excursion," for instance, contains splendid passages, but it is not interesting. "The Task," like "Don Juan," is; and, oddly enough, for the same reason. Neither Cowper nor Byron sat down to write a great poem upon a great subject. They wrote about whatever came into their minds. Cowper began with "The Sofa" in obedience to the commands of Lady Austen. But "The Sofa" was only a pretext to set him going. "Pursuing the train of thought," he tells us, "to which his situation and turn of mind led him, he brought forth at length, instead of the trifle which he at first intended, a serious affair—a volume." "The Task" is not, of course, really one poem at all; it is a series of essays in verse, and, to make its success the more strange, a series of essays in Miltonic blank verse. He professes to have chosen blank verse simply because Lady Austen was fond of it; and yet, no doubt, he was right in his choice. In some passages he seems merely to parody Milton; but as a rule his Miltonic style keeps him from being diffuse without hindering him from expressing his own thoughts and his own character. There could not be a stronger proof than this of his sincerity and originality. He had no theo-

ries about his art. He lived in an age of literary artifice, against which he made no protest, except that he would not imitate the tricks of Pope. He wrote in a variety of styles taken from other poets; and yet he also wrote like himself. He never borrowed matter with style, and other poets had but little influence upon his choice of subject.

Ideas go out of fashion; even the ideas of great poets become commonplace through their very greatness. But character never goes out of fashion, if it happens to charm. We read Walton's *Lives* still, and we read "The Vicar of Wakefield"; we find even what is old-fashioned in these books the more delightful because it seems to express the character of the writers. And so it is with Cowper's poetry. It is alive, and will remain so, because Cowper himself, with his pathetic gaiety, his tenderness, his clinging to simple little things as a refuge against the fear of blank infinity, still lives in it; and the fact that he died long ago, and that all the trifles which he loved and wrote about are also passed away, gives to his poetry the kind of quiet significance that we should find in an old house now emptied of all its inmates of many years, yet still filled with vestiges and tokens of their occupancy.

Where once we dwelt our name is
heard no more,
Children not thine have trod my nur-
sery floor;
And where the gardener Robin, day by
day,
Drew me to school along the public
way,
Delighted with my bauble coach, and
wrapt
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet
capt,
'Tis now become a history little known,
That once we called the pastoral house
our own.

THE ANODYNE OF THE KITCHEN GARDEN.

That is a charming story about Sydney Smith which Mr. Chamberlain told the other day in his speech on the Address. Lord Grey's Government had been severely beaten, and Sydney Smith, like many other Whigs of the day, was greatly cast down. It was not till he visited the kitchen garden that his drooping spirits revived; here he found the mustard and cress coming up as if nothing special had happened; indeed that all the usual operations of Nature were being carried on without interruption. Whereupon the sense of proportion was restored to the wit and his friends, and they began to recover from their difficulties. We think that it would not be in a place exactly like the House of Commons that we should seek advice as to how to keep this sense of proportion—in spite of Mr. Speaker's deserved reputation for possessing it in a high degree—but we should all be grateful to Mr. Chamberlain for the hint. Here is a protagonist himself reminding us that the black ox on the distant plain may in reality be but a small fly on the window-pane. Not particularly in party politics is this sense of proportion or perspective constantly in danger. The loss or sacrifice of it in politics may be noticeable just now because there has been a General Election. But after all only a few people have been electioneering. The great body of English people, alike rich and poor, educated and ignorant, have been going about their business and their pleasure as if polling places and public platforms had no existence. The same thing is remarkable in far greater tumults than a party election can cause. Take the French Revolution. This was a more important affair than the election of 1906. Yet the his-

tory of it, even during the throes of the Terror when Hébertists and Dantonists, Girondists and Jacobins were killing off each other, is not the intimate history of the French people during this period. Carlyle somewhere in his breathless story-book does stop for a moment to draw attention to the way in which the people in Paris itself, all the while the guillotine was shearing off heads, were going about their ordinary prosaic affairs for all the world as if nothing in particular were happening.

At first sight this detachment of most people from fevers and alarms of public affairs is comforting to those who value the balanced mind and equable life. The majority of us, then, are more or less in the position of Arnold's hero who saw life steadily and saw it whole, another way of saying that we see things in their real proportions? The cat of Demos, through the "mirage of overheated language," will not to us loom larger than the lion? Ah, but unhappily our sense of proportion, if tolerably preserved so far as public life is concerned, is constantly being lost in our private affairs and pursuits. This is said to be a "strenuous" age. Doctors or people who dabble in the doctor's art talk about the "pace" we all live now, the stress and storm of life in England in the twentieth century, and so forth. But are we all so tremendously strenuous? Are we greater in will or work than Englishmen were in the Elizabethan age or than they were, say—we take the date at random—in 1806? English literature and history do not show convincingly that this is so. But they do go to show that the active Englishman, and Englishwoman too, were far more on wires or on tenter-hooks then

than they are at this time. Constant fret over their business, professional career, social status, ailments actual and imaginary, opinions and prejudices, dress, food, reputation, and prospects in old age—it is this that wears out nerve and manhood rather than the really strenuous life. Dwelling on these cares of an over-stimulated imagination, harping on the same unhappy string, the man loses balance and right judgment. The world becomes ludicrously out of perspective for him. The disease of course is no new one. Martha cumbered herself with many unnecessary cares, and no doubt her sense of proportion suffered as a result. It has sometimes affected people whose lives and disposition would seem proof against it. Izaak Walton himself may be an instance, though “study to be quiet” was one of his grand rules, and though he has been written of again and again as one whose life was all equable and serene. It was pointed out, however, by an editor of the “Angler” a few years ago that there were signs that even Walton now and then was caught and detained—if only for a little while—in the “fine meshed net of the world.” He speaks of cares with which he burdened himself, and, in another place in his book, of the “fear of many things that will never be.” But if we could only withdraw ourselves from that fatal net so surely and soon as Walton did! As to real, honest cares and sorrows, we are not thinking of these; they are not related to the frets and worries, “the household jar within”; through them the man rarely loses sense of proportion; a poet writes of the “mighty hopes that make us men”—perhaps true cares, or burdens heavy to carry but carried, may be still more effective in this.

The ill is clear enough, then, and so

The Saturday Review.

easy to diagnose: a loss of power to distinguish the relative importance of things: hence discomfort and pain and a waste of vitality. But where is the cure? Sydney Smith, as Mr. Chamberlain reminds us, found it in the kitchen garden; and really we do not know of any anodyne surer and quicker than that which is to be found among the potatoes and cabbages. When all the world seems askew, dibbling in long straight rows of seed potatoes is a wonderful solace. A cynic may say that it has nothing to do with the potatoes, it is merely because you are in the open air that health of mind is restored through health of body. But we are not persuaded of this. Golf is in the open air, but we doubt whether it helps to give back to a man his sense of proportion so readily as does the kitchen garden. On the contrary, when the sufferer's ball is against the wall of a practically impossible bunker and he is being watched by an impatient, critical crowd at the tee just behind, his state may be worse than ever. We have found it sometimes (though Walton never did) the same in angling. When a big trout goes away with the fly, it's a world well lost for the fisher: no sense of proportion is left to him. There may be other ways besides that of the mustard and cress and potatoes. Watching the “operations of Nature” generally may have helped Sydney Smith and the Whigs. For instance, to watch Orion on the south sky just now a little after dark, with Sirius at his heels, and under him the giant Hare—this should tend to restore to a man his sense of proportion. You can have Orion too in London—on some very clear nights even the great nebula by his sword—where you cannot have the kitchen garden. Only on no account look up at the stars from a London street: you will be surely taken for a lunatic at large.

THE OPPOSITION IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

Under ordinary circumstances it could be nothing but gratifying to hear that a number of Peers, and especially of young Peers, were resolving to lead a serious political life. Although the constitution of the House of Lords stands, alike in theory and practice, at a long distance from that of an ideal Senate, there seems but little, if any, chance of our obtaining, for a long time to come, one of a type at once more rational and more robust than that which has come down to us through the ages. That being so, the evolution of fresh zeal for the adequate discharge of their high responsibilities among the members of the Upper House, always supposing that such zeal is according to knowledge, must be all to the good. Even as things are, the level of debate in the House of Lords, on serious occasions, is remarkably high. Great national issues, external and domestic, are, as a rule, discussed in worthy fashion; and it may also be acknowledged that, considering the very short allowance of time which in the last days of the Session they often receive for the examination of important legislative projects sent up by the Commons, the Committee discussions of the Peers are frequently very businesslike, practical, and discriminating. These facts are mainly due to the circumstance that the proceedings of the Upper House, in matters of consequence, have in practice been mainly confined to a very limited number of its members—men who have served in high office either at home or abroad, and who possess a real right to be heard on the subjects on which they speak. But there are, doubtless, among the younger Peers not a few men possessing inherited capacity for the treatment of public affairs, and naturally anxious not to

let their gifts rust in idleness. It would be distinctly for the advantage of the State if more adequate opportunities could be given for the utilization of their aptitudes, as well as of the ripe wisdom and experience of their seniors, in dealing with the legislative business of the nation. To that end it is much to be desired that, as far as possible, measures of social reform which are not of a highly controversial character, but on which Governments justly set store, should be introduced in the Upper House, and that when that has been done, and much time and thought have been expended on them by the Peers, business in the House of Commons should be so arranged as to secure that they will be considered and passed by the popular Assembly. Nothing can be more discouraging to conscientious effort on the part of the Peers than to have their carefully-wrought projects dealing with very important questions thrown aside as of no value by the Commons, as not seldom occurred during the last Parliament. Twice, we believe, this happened with a Bill brought forward by the late Lord Chancellor, and strongly supported by all that was best in the banking and commercial community of London, for the suppression of the practice of giving and receiving illicit commissions in business.

Public sympathy would be strongly with members of the Upper House in urging upon the present Government that this kind of waste of legislative time and energy should be reduced to a minimum, and that, as far as reasonably may be, the machinery of Parliamentary production should be utilized in both its parts, instead of having one section hopelessly congested and the other left without occupation for weeks.

together. But, unfortunately, there seems reason to fear that the inspiration of a movement of which we hear among some of the younger Peers is not so unexceptionable in character. It is stated that they are influenced by contemplating the great numerical inferiority of the Opposition in the House of Commons, or, as another version puts it, its "comparatively weak and helpless condition," to deem that an opportunity has arisen for more systematic criticism of the acts of His Majesty's Government by members of the party in the House of Lords, where it is very far from being in a numerical inferiority. With that view a number of Peers, it is said, have agreed to act together, delegating to a committee the duty of preparing questions and framing motions which may elucidate the policy of the Government. It is added that the primary object of this movement is not to induce the Upper House to reject measures submitted to it; but, rather, to exercise watchful criticism. These are very pretty phrases, but they cannot hide the very serious danger of which, indeed, they recognize the existence. That danger lies in the fact that there is a great and permanent Conservative majority in the House of Lords, and that while the duty of "watchful criticism" of the acts of the Government of the day is always incumbent on any Senate worthy of the name, its sudden discovery when the country has placed the Conservatives in a small minority in the Commons lays the discoverers open to serious suspicion. On the part which the Opposition play in the House of Lords during the present Parliament, may depend, to a great extent, the future part of that House in the constitutional system of the United Kingdom. Of that fact we may be sure that responsible Unionist statesmen like Lord Lansdowne are profoundly conscious; and they must be extremely anxious that

nothing should be done which will create in the public mind the belief that in the view of the majority in the Lords, whatever the Liberal Government does, or attempts, is more likely to be wrong than right. Without doubt the persistent practice of "watchful criticism" of Ministerialists by a number of young politicians in one House, prompted thereto by the consideration that their friends are in a minority in the other House, will tend, unless conducted with extraordinary self-restraint, to become nothing more nor less than harassing and bitter opposition. If the Duke of Marlborough and his friends engage in proceedings of that nature, they will, without doubt, be playing directly into the hands of the most advanced of their opponents and the most strenuous enemies of the powers of the House of Lords. There is nothing which subversive Radicals would more cordially welcome than the maintenance on the part of the majority of the Opposition Peers of so generally hostile an attitude towards the Liberal Government as to give color to the assertion that they were set on neutralizing, as far as possible, the effect of the popular will as declared in the ballot boxes. At the best, it is likely enough that on more than one legislative measure of consequence there may arise in this or some early Session serious conflicts of opinion between the two Houses. It is the part of prudent Unionists, the part, indeed, as we hold, of all patriotic men, to do all in their power to avoid the cultivation in any quarter of the temper which will lead to such conflicts, or which, if they occur, will make it difficult for them to be reasonably compromised. A guerilla warfare conducted by a number of ardent young Peers, with a view to embarrassing and discrediting the Government to which the people have just given their confidence with so deci-

sive a voice, could not fail to arouse widespread irritation; and while effecting little or nothing toward the modification of the general policy of Ministers, who have an overwhelming majority of the House of Commons behind them, it might quite conceivably reduce the chances of successful protest against some ill-considered step in legislation or administration. By self-

The Economist.

restraint, moderation of temper, and careful and limited selection of issues for challenge, the Opposition in both Houses may do work of considerable advantage to the nation. But if they proceed on other lines, particularly in the hereditary Chamber, they will create dangers from which not only their own party, but the whole State, may suffer grave and lasting damage.

THE INTELLIGENCE OF ANIMALS.*

Among those who have most carefully and successfully studied the habits and psychology of ants, Father Wassmann occupies a place in the front rank. He has especially devoted his attention to the curious and complicated relations which exist between ants and their domestic animals. Of these, he gives a list comprising no less than 1246 species! Father Wassmann is an accurate and careful observer, and his writings are most interesting.

To show how conscientiously he has studied the ants of his own district I may mention that he made a census of the ants' nests round his home. Many communities have more than one nest. Of *Formica sanguinea*, which he regards as the most gifted of European ants, he records 2000 nests belonging to 410 communities! Most of them have separate summer and winter nests, or rather nests for warm and dry, or cold and wet seasons.

Father Wassmann is by no means one of those who regard ants as exquisite automatons, "devoid even of the simplest sensitive perception and cognition." I quite concur with him—indeed, I expressed the same opinion

nearly fifty years ago—that "the life of ants is the climax of development in instinctive life throughout the animal kingdom"; and that "the chasm between the psychic life of animals and that of man, is, in many respects, wider between ape and man, than between ant and man."

Father Wassmann is also, I believe, quite correct in alleging that Buechner and Brehm, and even Romanes, have accepted many statements implying intelligence on the part of animals for which there was no sufficient evidence, some of which, indeed, were quite absurd; and, secondly, that they have in some cases built upon them conclusions for which there is no foundation, and which will not stand the test of critical examination.

On the other hand, I am unable to follow him when he altogether denies to ants any, even the most exiguous, rudiments of intelligence. As in the cases of Darwin and Forel, the conclusion forced upon me has been that animals, and especially ants, do possess some elements of intelligence. In that we agree with the vast majority of those who have studied dogs, elephants, &c.

Father Wassmann defines intelligence as "the power of acting with deliberation and self-consciousness, of inventing new means for attaining various

* "Comparative Studies in the Psychology of Ants and of Higher Animals." By E. Wassmann, S. J. Pp. x plus 200. (St. Louis, Mo., and Freiburg: B. Herder; London: Sands and Co., 1905.) Price 4s. 6d. net.

purposes and thus making progress in civilization." But if ants are descended from an original common stock in bygone times, no one will deny that they have "invented new means for attaining various purposes and thus making progress in civilization." Moreover, even now we see them adapting themselves to the circumstances of their complex life in a manner which it is surely an abuse of terms to call "instinctive." He admits that the observations of all who have studied ants conclusively demonstrate that ants are not mere reflex machines, but beings endowed with sensitive cognition and appetite, and with the power of employing in the most various manner their innate, instinctive faculties and abilities under the influence of different sense-perceptions. Surely, then, under his definition it is impossible to deny that they have some intelligence.

For instance, in constructing their nests, as Father Wassman admits, ants do not "cooperate with the regularity of a machine or according to a rigid pattern, but each ant with evident liberty follows her own impulse and her own plan. . . ."

As a rule the most zealous and skilful worker is imitated most; her zeal is catching, so that she directs the activity of the others into the same channel.

Indeed, Father Wassmann's fairness and love of truth compel him to make several candid admissions which seem fatal to his position. For instance, an Algerian ant (*Myrmecocystus altisquamis*) has wide open entrances to the nest. A colony, however, which Forel brought to Switzerland, being much annoyed by the attacks of *Tetramorium caespitum*, gradually contracted the doorways. On this Father Wassmann admits that, "as Forel says, these facts afford irrefutable evidence of the great plasticity of ant instinct. For, this

instinct is not merely a nervous mechanism forced to operate along uniform lines; it includes sensitive cognition and appetite, which are not only of an organic but also of a psychic nature."

Again, "within these limits, however, we find a wonderful adaptation of means to the end, and at times a marvellous sagacity of animal instinct, which appears nowhere else to such advantage."

This phenomenon manifests the marvellous sagacity and quasi-intelligent plasticity of animal instinct, which can hardly be styled "automatism." Neither can it be identified with intelligence properly so-called, for this would suppose rational knowledge of the internal laws governing the growth of the ant organism, a knowledge far surpassing even the intelligence of man and entirely beyond the reflections and experience of ants.

Surely, however, if ants have sagacity they must have intelligence. Nor is the attribution to them of "sagacity" an isolated case. Again on p. 157 he says:—

Their sagacity is instinctive, essentially different from intelligence and reflection. Ants are in their every action guided directly by sensitive perceptions, not by intellectual ideas. The enigma, therefore, is satisfactorily explained by the innate adaptation of their sensitive cognition and appetite, whereas the hypothesis of animal intelligence is unable to offer any solution.

"Instinctive sagacity" seems to me, I confess, a contradiction in terms.

I admit that the subject is one of much difficulty, but if an ant applied Father Wassmann's rigorous criticism to man himself, I am not sure that our boasted gift of reason could be absolutely proved.

No doubt animals do stupid things, but so do we.

Father Wassmann describes what he justly calls the "lovely scenes" in an ant's nest—the care of the young, the "motherly tenderness" shown to the delicate pupæ—but denies that this is any evidence of affection, and contrasts it with the love of a woman or a man for their children. This, he maintains, "is a *rational* love, *conscious of duty* (the italics are his), therefore it is the highest and noblest love existing in Nature." Far be it from me to say a word against either reason or duty. They are amongst the highest qualities of our nature; but surely they have nothing to do with the love we feel for our children, which rests on even nobler feelings.

While fully recognizing, then, the accuracy and interest of Father Wassmann's observations, and after carefully considering his arguments, I cannot but recognize in animals some vestiges and glimmerings of intelligence, and maintain, as I did thirty years ago, that "when we see an ant-hill, tenanted by thousands of industrious inhabitants, excavating chambers, forming tunnels, making roads, guarding their home, gathering food, feeding the young, tending their domestic animals—each one fulfilling its duties industriously, and without confusion—it is difficult altogether to deny to them the gift of reason; and the preceding observations tend to confirm the opinion that their mental powers differ from those of men, not so much in kind as in degree."

Avebury.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

Messrs. J. M. Dent have in press an edition of the works of Alexandre Dumas in forty-eight volumes, unabridged, which are to be issued at the rate of two volumes a month.

The indefatigable Mr. Lang, who claims most literary enclosures for his own, has just completed a Life of Joan of Arc to be included in a new series entitled "The Children's Heroes."

Mr. Whitelaw Reid, who is to preside at the 116th anniversary of the Royal Literary Fund on Thursday, May 10th, will be the second American Ambassador to occupy the chair. It is exactly a quarter of a century since James Russell Lowell presided.

"Some Reminiscences" by William M. Rossetti, will be published in two volumes early in the autumn. The book contains a complete record of

the Rossetti family and of the pre-Raphaelite movement, with many interesting facts and illustrations hitherto unpublished.

Dr. Frederick Jones Bliss, author of "Excavations at Jerusalem," has a new book in preparation with Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, entitled "The Development of Palestine Exploration," telling the story of the movement from the earliest times—"the displacement of the classic geographer by the credulous pilgrim, the gradual evolution of the pilgrim into the man of science." An illustrated record of discoveries made under the auspices of the Palestine Exploration Fund is coming from the same publishers in a book by Mr. R. A. S. Macalister, director of excavations for the fund, entitled "Bible Side-Lights from the Mound of Gezer: A Record of Excavation and Discovery in Palestine."

The title "The New Sketch Book" which Mr. Robert S. Garnett has given to his volume containing hitherto uncollected writings of Thackeray, is misleading, since it suggests comparison with the Paris or Irish Sketch Books, with which it has no relation and to which it bears no resemblance. The papers which it contains are of a critical character and were contributed by Thackeray in his earlier years to the *Foreign Quarterly Review*. They are about certain French and German books published in the forties. Here and there are unmistakable touches of Thackeray's delightful humor, and the book will be welcomed by lovers of Thackeray who account every scrap of his writing precious.

Dr. George M. Gould has published, through P. Blakiston's Sons & Co. a third volume of "Biographic Clinics" which contains as did the earlier volumes a group of essays concerning the influence of defective eyesight upon the health of patients. Dr. Gould has been a wide and indefatigable observer and student in this special field, and he has accumulated a great number of facts illustrative of his general thesis that to neglect or wrong treatment of the eyes is to be attributed a large part of the sum total of human misery. The evidence which he presents regarding the effect of morbid visual conditions upon children is especially deserving the attention of educators and parents as well as of physicians.

The "medley of memories" which Mr. Alexander Innes Shand has brought together in his latest volume "Days of the Past" (E. P. Dutton & Co., publishers) are not so heterogeneous as his characterization of them would suggest. They are related after a fashion, although loosely, and they include sketches of rural and of city life, of coaching and hunting, of London clubs

and Scotch ecclesiastics, of editors and writers, of soldiers and statesmen, and much else beside,—the whole constituting a series of pictures of the England of the second half of the nineteenth century. Mr. Shand has had a long experience as journalist and reviewer. He does not take himself or his subject too seriously: and the successive chapters of his book resemble the pleasant and familiar chat of a friend who has known a good deal of affairs and men, and finds leisure in his later years to talk about them.

India picturesque,—with just enough of India historic and political to give a setting and a background—is the subject of Mr. A. H. Hallam Murray's "The High-Road of Empire," of which E. P. Dutton & Co are the American publishers. Mr. Murray does not profess to have had unusual opportunities for seeing India or studying the habits of its people. He was simply an alert and interested traveller, whose experiences were such as might befall any similar traveller, but whose impressions were tinged by a pervading and patriotic sense of the glory and greatness of England and the opportunities and obligations of her great empire in the East. The book is well adapted to serve three functions: as a guide and companion of travellers who are about to make the Indian tour; as a souvenir to those who have done so; and as a graphic and diverting narrative of travel for those who do most of their travelling by proxy. For all three purposes its value is enhanced by more than one hundred small illustrations and by nearly fifty colored plates. These last, produced by the three-color process, have the charm of water colors, and they decorate and beautify a volume which is intrinsically interesting and valuable as a vivid description of the present aspects of an ancient and alien civilization.

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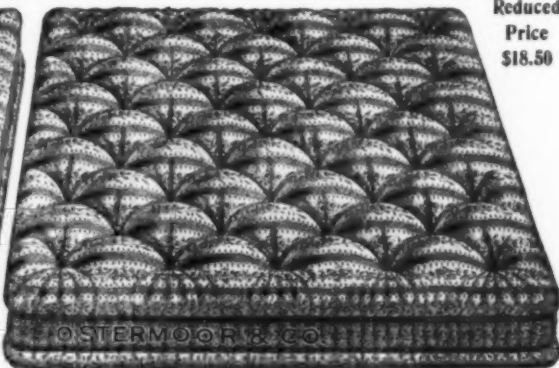
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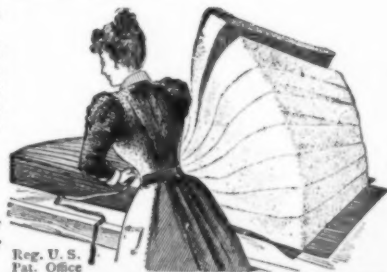
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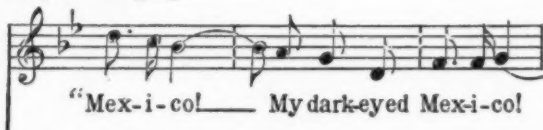
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